DIFFERENCES IN THE UMMAT AND SIRAAT-E-MUSTAQEEM

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QUESTION:

Respected Janaab Moulana Saheb,

Assalaamualaikum,

A real brother of mine, my cousin, five real uncles, many other close family and I are residing in Dubai and Sharjah now for quite some time. All of us, besides one or two of us perform our Salaat with regularity and punctuality. We spend many of our free hours discussing the various schools of thought. Most of us are relatively learned, and have a good understanding of the religion. Most of us have Kitaabs of the various Ulama of differing Aqaa`id, of which we study quite thoroughly. As far as our relatives are concerned, as close as we are, we have that many differing ideologies and differences between us. We indulge in great criticisms of each other's beliefs. Just like is happening in our hometown, where people criticise and revile the respected Ulama of the opposition. Most of us are of the Sunni Aqaa`id, who regard themselves as the true lovers of Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), and therefore imagine themselves to be the best of the lot. Just like presently in Pakistan, Noorani Mia Saheb regards himself and his group as "Suwaad-e-Azam", and they perform only the Fardh Salaat, stating as proof that Islaam began with that only. There is a group amongst us here that is similar. In their opinion there is no Aalim in Pakistan other than Moulana Maudoodi, whom they will follow. Their claim is that it is shirk for the visitors to the grave of Ghaus (rahmatullahi alaih) to read 'Faatihah' and to have 'Gyaarwi' and 'Khatam Shareef'.

Nevertheless, when all of us have any discussion, then I am appointed as the third person (i.e. as mediator), that is because I do not sight or condemn any particular group nor do I condemn any Aalim. All my companions readily and gladly accept my decision. In this way many of our discussions reach an end and a suitable conclusion. However, there are some questions, which due to a lack of knowledge, I cannot reach a final decision. After reading your article in the 'Jang', of which I am an avid reader, and which I read with great enthusiasm, I have made mashwera with my companions, and we have agreed to forward some pertinent questions to you, to which we have not as yet reached any agreement upon:

1. What is the difference between the beliefs of the Sunni, Shiah, Deobandi, Barelwi and Wahaabi sects? What are their differences? Which is the most virtuous amongst them? How many sects do they comprise of? Also, we would appreciate it if you could mention the names of the Imaams (leaders) together with their descriptions.

2. To what extent would it be correct to perform only the Fardh Salaat? I have asked a notable Egyptian Aalim, who lectures here - as to the reason why he only performs the two Fardh Rakaats of the Jumuah Salaat, whilst there are also Sunnats and Nafls to perform. He replied by averring that the door of the room of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) was attached to Masjid-e-Nabawi, and Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), after performing the two Rakaats of Fardh of Jumuah, would leave the Masjid and go into his room, where it is not known what he read therein. He claims that in this way he is following the Sunnat-e-Nabawi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam).

   Could you please be kind enough to shed some light on this subject and explain this mas`alah and tell us if this lecturer is correct in his claim or not. If he is incorrect then what is the correct mas`alah?

3. Is the recitation of 'Faatihah' for the visitors to a grave, to give 'Ghyaarwi Shareef' and 'Khatam Shareef' (i.e. for the forgiveness of the deceased to recite Qur`aan Shareef and make Thikr – in groups) shirk? Explain in the light of the Qur`aan and Sunnat. I am appealing to you that, since its answer will change our lives, we have all agreed to act upon whatever reply you furnish from the Qur`aan and Sunnah, we request you to show us the correct road.

We request you for duas.
Muhammed Kareem
Dubai (UAE).

REPLY:

The interest and enthusiasm shown by yourself and your companions is praiseworthy and congratulatory. However, my advice is that you change this interest of yours from discussions and debates to learning and teaching Deen. Devote your time and energies to the practical implementation of the Deen. You should make an effort to adopt the lifestyle of our beloved Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) and likewise turn the attention of others in that direction.

This suggestion of mine is based on two reasons. Discussions and debates hamper the ability of a person to carry out (good) actions. It is reported in Musnad-e-Ahmad, Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah and Mustadrak Haakim that Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) said:

"That nation is not led astray after the guidance has been brought to them, except when they are given to arguments."

Hence no good abodes for that nation that indulges in arguments and debates. Another point is that by having too many discussions and debates, generally, people's enthusiasm to understand is plagued, and they are more desirous of having their views and opinions accepted. Also, that person who is not very well learned in the Shariah, tends to get carried away and does not pay heed and give due consideration to the limits of the Shariah. At times it may happen that a thing may be false and incorrect (in terms of the Shariah) and this person will endeavour to prove it to be true and Haqq. At times in such discussions a person may slur and revile an accepted servant of Allaah Ta`ala's, hence blackening his Book of Deeds. A combination of all these factors, not only deprives one of the virtue of good actions, in fact, one's mental ability and tendency to accept the Haqq decreases gradually.

Therefore, it is my humble and sincere advice to all of you that each one of you follow and place your trust on that Aalim, whom you envisage and consider as being on Haqq, whom you deem is an Aalim-e-Muhaqqiq, and who is conveying the Message of Allaah Ta`ala and the Sunnah of Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) to the people for the Pleasure of Allaah Ta`ala. Practice according to this person's advice and teachings and continue with your daily routine. Instead of all this vain discussions and debates, you should all rather spend your time more constructively and engage in Thikr, Tilaawat, Durood Shareef or some other beneficial Deeni work.

Your first question, albeit very concise and short in words, nevertheless, its answer requires an in-depth answer that would extend into a voluminous Kitaab. This useless writer does not have the ability or the opportunity to render such a detailed answer, such that I may fulfil the rights of this subject. However, in order to fulfil your request we will write a few lines. If this proves to be beneficial to yourself and your companions then this will be a means of the salvation and good fortune for this worthless writer.

First of all, it is necessary to know and understand what the true "Deen-e-Haqq" is. This will be our starting point and our basis for establishing which group is on the Haqq and Straight Path, or which is the closest to the Haqq.

I, you and every Muslim is fully aware that the "Deen-e-Haqq" is that Divine Message which was revealed to us through our Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). This is what Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) and his (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam)'s Companions practiced upon. And this is also (that Deen) which Allaah Ta`ala had promised to safeguard until Qiyaamah. Allaah Ta`ala has safeguarded this Deen through the Qur`aan Majeed, the statements and actions of Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), the practice of the Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum) and the explanations and interpretations of the Aimmah-e-Mujtahiddeen. Alhamdulillah, until today all these things are just and safely and securely protected in the Ummat. It is as though this Deen has been revealed for this time and era.

Another point which is necessary to understand is that in this Ummat there are two types of differences (Ikhtilaafs). Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) has notified the Ummat with regard to these differences and he has also guided the Ummat with regard to both of them.

The first type of difference is with regard to the Ijtihaadi Masaa`il (Interpretations of law points), which occurred between the Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum), the Tabieen and the Aimmah-e-Mujtahiddeen. A reflection of this evident in the Hanafi, Shaafi, Maaliki and Hambali Math-habs which are well known as an "Ikhtilaaf". This type of difference also occurred, at times, during the blessed era of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). For example, once, Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) instructed the Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum) on the occasion of arriving at the tribe of Banu Quraidha: ***"None of you should read his Asr Salaat except at (arrival at) Banu Quraidha."*** It so transpired that the Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum) were delayed in reaching there and the time of Asr Salaat was about to terminate. The Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum) made mashwera as to what they should do. The mashwera resulted in two groups. The one group opined that since Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) gave a clear-cut instruction that Asr Salaat only be read at arrival at Banu Quraidha, how is it possible for them to perform their Salaat now on the way. Therefore, even though the Salaat may become Qadha, they felt that it was necessary to follow the instructions of Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). The second group felt that the import and intention of Nabi's (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) instruction was that they reach Banu Quraidha before the expiry of Asr Salaat time, and upon reaching there they were to perform the Asr Salaat. Therefore, they felt that since the time for sunset was drawing close, and they would not reach there before sunset, there was no question about making the Asr Salaat Qadha. They felt that it did not mean that if they were delayed in reaching there then they had to make the Asr Salaat Qadha. They felt that this would worsen their shortcomings.

Nevertheless, the first group decided to make the Salaat Qadha, thereby fulfilling the explicit instructions of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), whilst the second group alighted from their conveyances and performed the Salaat opining that they were fulfilling and carrying out the intention the desire of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). When news of this incident reached Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), he did not rebuke either of the two groups, in fact he regarded both of them as being correct, since both of them had completed and carried out his intention and desire. There are many other such examples beside this one. In conclusion, we have ascertained that one such difference is this type, which is called an "Ijtihaadi Ikhtilaaf".

This type of difference is not merely a natural, inevitable or indispensable difference, in fact, Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) had termed such a difference a Rahmat (mercy). And for that person whom Allaah Ta`ala had imbued with even the slightest bit of insight, will immediately discern why such differences are termed as a Rahmat. Due to a lack of opportunity, I should have shed much more light on this topic. In conclusion, this type of difference is completely correct and in order. The ruling for the general masses (regarding such differences) is that they follow with conviction whichever Imaam-e-Mujtahid they have trust and confidence in, whilst keeping in mind and granting due respect and honour to the other pious personalities. All these personalities were of a very high level of intelligence and experts in Deen and they were also spiritually very elevated. Their was and is not a single person from amongst those who followed them who could even match their knowledge. There is also none who came after them that can be equal to them in piety and Noor-e-Ma`rifat (recognition of Allaah Ta`ala). This is precisely the reason why great great personalities and Auliyaah -- the likes of Hadhrat Peer-o-Murshid Sheikh Abdul Qaadir Jilaani, Sayidud Taa`ifah Hadhrat Junaid Baghdaadi, Sheikh Muhyuddin Ibn Arabi, Khwajah Ali Hijoori, Ganj Bakhash Baba Fareedud Deen Shakar Ganj, Mujaddid Alf-e-Thaani (rahmatullahi alaihim ajmaeen) -- were all the followers of these Aimmah-e-Mujtahiddeen.

The second type of difference is known as "Nazaryaati Ikhtilaaf" (Theoretical differences). This is the subject matter of your question. Our Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) had also foretold and predicted such differences. This type of difference is also the basis and differentiation between Haqq and Baatil. Hence, Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) said: ***"The Bani Israeel were separated into 72 sects and my Ummat will be slit into 73 sects. All of them, besides one, will be in the Fire."*** It was asked: ***"O Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam)! Which***

will be this successful sect?" Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) replied: ***"Those that will remain on that path which I and my Sahaabah are on."***
It is reported in another Hadith that 72 sects will go to Jahannum and one to Jannat – and this is the "Al-Jamaat" – i.e. that group which will be on Haqq. And some people will abscond from this Jamaat, their desires and false opinions will lead them astray just as the bite of a rabid dog makes a person ill, such that not a joint, vein or fibre of his remains except that this illness penetrates it.

It is reported in another Hadith: ***"Any person remains alive after me will see many differences in the Ummat. Therefore he should hold on fast to my way and the way of the Khulafaa-e-Raashideen. He must hold on to it with his teeth. Take Heed! Stay away from all new innovations (that will spring up), because all such innovations (which are regarded as being part of Deen) are a Bid`ah and every Bid`ah is astray."***

It is reported in another Hadith that Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) once drew a line and said that this is (symbolises) the Road of Allaah Ta`ala. He then drew some small lines on either side of this line and said that these are those paths upon which one shaitaan sits at each one and tends to lead man astray by tempting him towards it. (indicating to the first line) Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) said: ***"This is the correct path."*** Saying this, Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) recited the following Aayat: ***"This is My Straight Path, hence tread upon it."***

All these Ahaadith are reported in Mishkaat Shareef.

Regarding this subject there are many other Ahaadith, the compiling of which I am presently unable. There is also no need for it (at this juncture). From these statements, the following points become clear:

a). Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) had forewarned the Ummat regarding Nazaryaati Ikhtilaafs.

b). He displayed an aversion for this type of differences and with the exception of one sect, he warned all the others with the Fire.

c). Such Ikhtilaafs are the basis for leading people on Haqq or Baatil. Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) had clearly said that whoever treads the path and follows the way chalked out by him and follow his Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum), will be on Haqq. Whoever goes astray of this path is on Baatil. The path of Haqq and the distinguishing factor is the way of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) and his Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum). The Qur`aan Majeed had also in many instances, stated this as the basis of the Haqq. In one Aayat it is stated: ***"And he who opposes the Rasool after guidance had come to him, and he treads (a path) other than the path of the believers, We will take to him (in the direction) to where he is going, and We will fling him into Jahannum, an evil abode."***

In this Aayat, the ***"path of the believers***" refers to the Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum).

d). Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) had labelled any innovation which was to come after him, in the name of the Deen, as "Bid`ah".

e). Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) had also outlined the reason and contributory factor of Bid`ah and deviation, as being incorrect desires. This is such an illness that destroys one's heart and mind. Just as the poison in the bite of a rabid dog seeps into the system of the victim, which renders a normal person into displaying bestial tendencies. In that same way a person who is inflicted with the poison of false and incorrect opinions, his every vein and fibre is seeped with self-opinion. Then, besides his own opinions he disregards every other view.

f). Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) had also guided the Ummat in that at such a time when all such differences rear their ugly heads in the Ummat, then they should hold on fast to his Sunnah and that of his Khulafaa-e-Raashideen. There is absolutely no doubt or qualm about this being the road of true guidance. Muslims must hold on fast to this path, with their teeth. There may come a multitude of new innovations and differing views and opinions, but the Ummat must hold on fast to this path of guidance and not leave it.

g). Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) has also indicated that this is the Path of (to) Allaah Ta`ala, which he had demonstrated and upon which the Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum) had treaded. This Path will remain so until Qiyaamah. Besides this "Path of Allaah Ta`ala", there are many other 'side-streets' upon which a shaitaan is sitting and waiting to lead man astray by temptation. However, the Ummat must be vigilant and wary. They must know that the Road leading to Allaah Ta`ala is (only) the one which Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) had showed. That is also the Road upon which the Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum) and the Khulafaa-e-Raashideen (radhiAllaahu anhum) had treaded, and which all the Salf-e-Saaliheen (pious predecessors) and Auliyaa had followed. Besides this ONE road all the others are the inventions of shaitaan. Whoever calls to any of these roads is the agent of shaitaan, in fact, he is the personification of shaitaan. Whosoever, deviates from the Path of Allaah Ta`ala and ventures into one of the other roads, must know that he has entered a cave and into the mouth of a large snake. Or that he has ventured into some dangerous jungle and has become prey to a wild animal.

If one keeps in mind these principles and guidelines set out by the Qur`aan Majeed and the Ahaadith, and one understand them well, then it will not be difficult for one to discern and recognise which of all the groups mentioned in your question is the one which is on Haqq. It will also not then be necessary for me to analyse each one of them. However, for your ease and benefit, I will analyse and dilate briefly on each one of them.

1). THE DIFFERECE BETWEEN THE SUNNIS AND SHIAHS

You and every other Muslim is well aware of this fact that there were no Nazaryaati Ikhtilaafs during the noble era of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) and his Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum). In fact, during that era, the entire Ummat was free from the bane of (such) Ikhtilaafs and it was a united force against the entities of kufr. The first time that Nazaryaati Ikhtilaafs rose its ugly head was towards the end of the Khilaafat of Hadhrat Uthmaan (radhiAllaahu anhu). This was the starting point of the Shiah creed. Their first basis and initiative was plain, that is (they claimed) that Hadhrat Ali (radhiAllaahu anhu) who was the close and beloved relative of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) was the first most worthy candidate for the Khilaafat. This theoretical opinion of theirs, albeit seemingly simple and plain, and outwardly amiable, was the antithesis of Islaamic teachings and the 23 years of Nabi's (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) teaching. This is so because Islaam has eradicated the veneration of nepotism and lineage and based honour and dignity on "Taqwa" (piety and fear of Allaah Ta`ala). As far as the attribute of Taqwa was concerned, Hadhrat Abu Bakr (radhiAllaahu anhu) was the most outstanding amongst the Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum), as is borne out by the word ***"At Taqaa"*** (*The* Pious One), which appears in Surah Wal-Lail and refers to Hadhrat Abu Bakr (radhiAllaahu anhu). It is for this reason that he as the most worthy successor to Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam).

In the Jaame Masjid of Kufa, Hadhrat Ali (radhiAllaahu anhu) was asked the reason as to why Hadhrat Abu Bakr (radhiAllaahu anhu) was made the Khalifah after the demise of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). Hadhrat Ali (radhiAllaahu anhu) replied that the most important form of Ibaadat in Deen is Salaat, and Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), during his final illness appointed Hadhrat Abu Bakr (radhiAllaahu anhu) as the Imaam of the Salaat of the Muslims, notwithstanding the presence of Hadhrat Ali (radhiAllaahu anhu). Even though Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) was fully aware of the presence of Hadhrat Ali (radhiAllaahu anhu), he nonetheless, chose Hadhrat Abu Bakr (radhiAllaahu anhu) as the Imaam, hence Hadhrat Ali (radhiAllaahu anhu) said that the same personality whom Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) chose as the Imaam of the Muslims in Deeni matters, they are pleased to choose him as their Imaam in worldly matters.

This then is the spurious basis which the Shiahs have based their difference upon. The initiator of this Baatil theory was the Munaafiq, who was a Jew, namely Abdullaah Bin Sabaa and his cohorts. They were the ones who burnt at the victories of Islaam. They intended to change the course of the flood of Islaamic progress. They saw no other way except to inject the poison of difference and dispute amongst the Muslim Ummat, thereby rendering it in pieces and scattered the unity of its adherents. When fighting and hostility flares up amongst the Muslims, then there remains no more any guts or spirit in them to fight kufr. Hence they (Shiahs) started their slogan of "Hubbe Ali", thereby spoiling the Aqaa`id of many Muslims and exploding a hydrogen bomb of Ikhtilaaf amongst the Ummat of Muslims.

Had Islaam not been the final religion and had Allaah Ta`ala not made a promise to safeguard it until Qiyaamah, then it was close that this fort of Islaam would have buckled under this vile and evil force. Just as the conniving Jews had spoilt and changed the face of the Deen of Hadhrat Isaa (alaihi salaam), so too would they have scored a success with Islaam. However, the Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum), Tabieen and Hadhrat Ali (radhiAllaahu anhu) himself had challenged this fitnah with force and had thus nipped it in the bud. The result was that the Shiah beliefs and theories were forced and compelled to hide behind the veil of "Taqiyah" (holy hypocrisy).

Later, the Shiahs were split into many groups and sects. The details of this can be seen in the Kitaab of Hadhrat Abdul Qaadir Jilaani (rahmatullahi alaih), *"Ghuniatut Talibeen"* and the Kitaab of Hadhrat Shah Muhaddith Dehlwi (rahmatullahi alaih), *"Tuhfah Ithnaa Ashariyyah"*. From amongst all these sects of Shiasm, one named "Shiah Imaamiyah" or "Shiah Ithna Ashariyyah", is the surviving and existent "Shiah" that is prevalent today. The details of their beliefs are not appropriate at this juncture. Nevertheless, a few of their principles and beliefs are listed hereunder:

1). The theory of Imaamat -- The basic principle of the Shiah creed is their "Aqeedah-e-Imaamat". The crux of this belief is that just as Allaah Ta`ala had specially appointed and sent the Prophets (alaihimus salaam) in the same He had sent and specially appointed the Imaams that came after Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). These Imaams are, according to the Shiah religion also free of faults and sinless. Wahi (Divine Revelation) is sent to them. Their obedience is necessary just as is that of a Prophet. They, just like Prophets, can issue and regulate the rulings of Shariah. They also have the prerogative to change and abrogate any law that is contained in the Qur`aan Majeed.
It is as though the Aqaa`id of Islaam, and its every aspect is in the hands of a specially appointed Prophet, which is understandable, nevertheless, the Shiahs aver that their "Imaams" have this same status and rank.

This theory of Imaamat of the Shiahs is a rebellious opposition to the finality of Prophethood of our Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) and it is a clear conspiracy against the existence of Islaam. This is the reason why all the false claimants to prophethood since the times of yore upto Mirza Ghulaam Ahmad have borrowed this Shiah concept of Imaamat as an expedient loophole to their false claims.

This concept of Imaamat of the Shiah religion is inherently and naturally incorrect. The reason being that the Shiahs themselves will not be able to sustain the burden of this belief for a long time. In fact they have terminated their Imaamat theory upon their 12th Imaam, who, since the year 260A.H. has been in hiding in a cave and has ever since disappeared. Today, an entire 11 centuries later, the Shiahs are still unaware where exactly their Imaam is and what is his condition .

As much as I contemplate upon the Shiah's theory of Imaamat, I am becoming more and more convinced that this theory has been thrust against the finality of the prophethood of our Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) and it has been connived so as to grant impetus and validity to the false claimants to prophethood and Imaamat. Consider well – since the time of Hadhrat Isaa (alaihi salaam) until the time of our Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) an entire period of six centuries passed, but there was no guider sent to the Ummat from Allaah Ta`ala. Here on the

other hand, after the Sun of the Finality of Prophethood (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), who illuminated the universe with his Noor, passes away, according to the Shiah belief, Allaah Ta`ala did not leave the world for one minute, nay not even one second and He established some 'sinless Imaam' who then changes the Deen and abrogates the Qur`aan Majeed. And then, this is not restricted o only one Imaam, there comes 12 of them in succession. And then suddenly, after two and a half centuries of Islaam has passed, Allaah Ta`ala (abruptly) closes the succession of Imaams. In fact, the twelfth Imaam who was sent, is made to disappear forever at the age of two.

Can there be any person who believes in the Nubuwwat of Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), and who accepts that he (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) was not sent to destroy, change and disfigure Islaam, in fact, he (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) was sent to sustain and be a means for the procurement of Islaam until the Day of Qiyaamah, ever tolerate this theory of Imaamat of the Shiahs?

The 'seniors' of the Shiah religion, who they brand as their Imaams, have also themselves never claimed Imaamat. They never laid claim to be leaders of the Allaah Ta`ala's creation. In fact, every one of them were the elders of the Ahle Sunnah and they were the illumination to the eyes of the believers. Their Deen and beliefs, their methods and ways, and their manner of Ibaadat was never in accordance to that of the Shiah religion. Actually they followed the ways and methods of the Sahaabah and Taabieen. It was in accordance to that Deen which was left by Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), and that which the entire Muslim Ummat practices upon. These pious personalities practised upon this Islaam in front of all to see. However, the Shiahs wish us to believe that the beliefs of these people were something else, but in accordance to their spurious belief in 'Taqiyah' (holy hypocrisy) they were concealing their true beliefs and showing something else to the people. According to the Shiah religion, it is as though Allaah Ta`ala sent sinless Imaams who were incapable of guiding mankind and forever hid behind the cloak of Taqiyah. And their twelfth Imaam is so concealed that none knows his whereabouts to this day! From this we can ascertain that this theory of Imaamat of the Shiahs, not only strikes at the finality of Nubuwwat of our Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), in fact it is clearly even contrary to the intelligence and reasoning. This can never be the teachings of Allaah Ta`ala, it is the invention of the warped brain of some Jew.

2). The second largest principle of the Shiah religion is their hatred and enmity for the Sahaabah-e-Kiraam (radhiAllaahu anhum). According to the Shiahs, all those Sahaabah (this would include Hadhrat Ali - radhiAllaahu anhu) who, after the demise of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), took the pledge of allegiance (Ba`it) at the hands of Hadhrat Abu Bakr (radhiAllaahu anhu) are murtad and kaafir (Nauthubillah!) due to this action of theirs. The reason for this is, that they did not take ba`it at the hands of the sinless Imaam – Hadhrat Ali (radhiAllaahu anhu). And since Hadhrat Ali (radhiAllaahu anhu) did not lay claim to Khilaafat during the eras of all three Khalifahs before him, in fact, he also took Ba`it at their hands, is the reason why the Shiahs are infuriated with him, as well.

This claim of the Shiahs is so spurious and false that it requires no review. The object of this belief of theirs is that the duty of our Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) in this world is, Nauthubillah, completely useless and futile. The claim of Islaam is that he (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) was sent for the guidance of the entire mankind until the Day of Qiyaamah. However, the belief of the Shiahs avers that this is completely incorrect. (According to their belief) Islaam never progressed even for a day after the demise of our Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), in fact, the entire group (of Sahaabah) upon whom Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) made a concerted effort for 23 continuous years and he prepared them, and whom he made a means of intermediaries between himself and the coming Ummat, all of the became murtad (Nauthubillah!) after his demise. From this is plain, clear and simple that the Shiah creed is the anti-theses of Islaam. That is, if the Shiah religion is correct, then, Islaam is – Nauthubillah – wrong! And if Islaam is correct, then it will be obvious according to any intelligent and right-headed person to conclude that Shiasm is wrong and spurious.

The attack upon the friends and companions of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) is such a blow to Islaam itself and to Nabi's (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) being, that history will fall short of finding a likeness thereof. It is

stated in Tafseer-e-Mazhari, that the Ustaad of Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullahi alaih), Hadhrat Sha`bi (rahmatullahi alaih) said that if the Jews are asked who are the most revered and honoured persons amongst their Ummat, then they will immediately reply that it is the friends and companions of Hadhrat Moosa (alaihi salaam). And if the Christians are asked the same question, then they will immediately reply that it is the helpers (companions) of Hadhrat Isaa (alaihi salaam). But if the Shiahs are asked the question: "Who are the worst persons amongst your Ummat?" They will immediately reply that it is the Companions of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam. Nauthubillah, Astaghfirullah!

Nevertheless, if the Shi`ite belief of the theory of Imaamat is an opposition to the finality of Prophethood of our Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), then their theory of 'tabarra' (showing disdain, disapproval at and abuse of the first Khalifahs of Islaam) is a much worse rebelliousness against the very Nubuwwat of our Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). And no person who has belief in Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) will ever be able to condone and tolerate this, that the entire group, whom he (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) had prepared during his lifetime, had Nauthubillah, became murtad the moment his eyes closed.

3). The third belief of the Shiahs is even worse than the previously mentioned two beliefs of theirs. However, just as two plus two equals four, this third belief of theirs is an obvious result of the first two. And this belief of theirs is "Tahreef-e-Qur`aan Majeed" (that the Qur`aan Majeed was distorted and tampered with).

Let alone a Muslim, upto this day, not even the worst of kaafirs has the courage to say (and none in their right frame of mind will be able to aver), that the Qur`aan Majeed which is present with the Muslims of today, that sanctified the Kitaab which has been preserved through the ages, and of which thousands, nay millions have memorised, is not the same Kitaab which was revealed to our Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). But, 'bravo' to the inventors of the Shiah religion, who have included this belief in the Shiah creed. The Shiahs aver that the Qur`aan Majeed which is present with the Muslims today is not the same Qur`aan Majeed as the original which was revealed to Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). They claim that this is "Sahifa-e-Uthmaani" (the script of Hadhrat Uthmaan - radhiAllaahu anhu).

(They aver that) The original Qur`aan Majeed is hidden with the 12th Imaam in some unknown cave. Besides one of two, every Mujtahid, Aalim and Imaam of the Shiahs accepts this contention. There exist more than two thousand narrations from their 'sinless Imaams' which are unanimous on this issue. How can this not be the case when according to the Shiahs, after the demise of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), Nauthubillah, all the Sahaabah became murtad, so how can it be that they bring Imaan on that Qur`aan-e-Kareem which was conveyed by these Sahaabah?

It is for this reason that those few Shiahs who accept the present Qur`aan Majeed to be in its original revealed state, have to accept and recognise the integrity and honour of the Sahaabah-e-Kiraam (radhiAllaahu anhum).

It is as though whoever believes as true the Shiah religion, can never bring ring Imaan on the present Qur`aan Majeed. And it is also not possible to bring Imaan in any Qur`aan of the Shiahs.

There are many other beliefs and theories of the Shiah religion, but we will not discuss them here. Just by mere consideration of these three beliefs of theirs, one can ascertain exactly what relationship there is between Islaam and Shiasm.

Above, I had mentioned the Hadith wherein Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) drew a line by way of an example and said: "This is Allaah Ta`ala's Path", and then he drew a few lines branching off from this centreline, and said: "These are those paths, upon which each one of them sits a shaitaan, which invites man towards it."

Citing this, I am of the opinion that the Shiah religion is one of the first offshoots and opposing factors of Islaam, which shaitaan has devised and invented through the medium of his Jewish agents in order to mislead man.

Right from the very first day after the demise of our Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), did the Shiah religion aspire to sever the link of the Ummat to his (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam)'s Mubarak being. They had sought to uproot the entire foundation and basis of Islaam, and create another new religion in opposition to Islaam. You may have heard that the Shiah creed is unhappy about the Kalimah of Islaam. In fact, they have added the verse *"Ali Waliullah, Wasi Rasulullaah wa Khalifatun Bila Faslin".* Since the Shiahs do not accept the Kalimah and the Qur`aan Majeed of the Muslims, then is there anything left to say? And one of the most unfortunate things is their hatred and enmity towards the Sahaabah-e-Kiraam (radhiAllaahu anhum ajmaeen), from which all believers seek protection.

The Sahaabah-e-Kiraam were the first recipient of the divine Revelation. Their history is an integral part of the history of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). Their character and behaviour were proofs of the Nubuwwat of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). They were the guide and teachers of the entire coming Ummat. Our Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) placed the duty of conveying the Deen upon their able and capable shoulders. The Ummat that followed, whatever good they had acquired was through the Barkat and blessings of the Sahaabah-e-Kiraam. It is for this reason that love for the Sahaabah-e-Kiraam stems from the love for Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), since they were nurtured and sprung from him. Hatred for the Sahaabah stems from hatred for Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). Love for them is a part of Imaan. To slur and malign them is not mere disrespect; in fact, it necessitates the removal of Imaan. Therefore my belief is of that of the Ahle Sunnah Wal Jamaat, that the family and companions of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) are all worthy of the utmost respect and honour.

That person who has even the least bit of connection to Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), will love everything that was close to him. Especially those personalities who were his deputies after his demise. We have been blessed with the honour of Imaan owing to their sacrifices and efforts. Therefore, in the defence of Hadhrat Ali (radhiAllaahu anhu), those who criticised Hadhrat Uthmaan (radhiAllaahu anhu) were, in my opinion, astray. In the same way, I also deem that person to be astray who casts even the slightest slur and criticism at Hadhrat Ali (radhiAllaahu anhu). Also, that person who, in defence of Yazeed criticises Hadhrat Hussein (radhiAllaahu anhu). I understand the love and affection for every family member and companion of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) to be a part of Imaan. I deem any criticism levelled at any one of them, be it by way of indication, inference or directly to be a sign of one losing his Imaan. This is my belief. I hope to meet Allaah Ta`ala in His Court with this belief of mine.

2). THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE HANAFIS AND WAHAABIS

The second difference that you have requested about is the one between the Hanafis and Wahabis. You also wanted to know which of the two is on Haqq. To understand the particulars of this difference it is important that you first understand a few points:

1. I had mentioned at the offset that the 'theoretical differences' (Nazaryaati Ikhtilaaf) of the Ummat is without doubt a Fitnah. But, 'Ijtihaadi Ikhtilaaf' (the difference regarding interpretations of legal points), is not only inevitable and natural, in fact, it is a source of mercy for this Ummat. This will be so on this condition that no hardness is attached to it, thereby making it a source of trouble.

2. You have also been made aware that those seniors of the Ummat that have been accepted as the Aimmah-e-Ijtihaad, they were not merely experts in the field of Qur`aan and Sunnah, they had excellent critical ability with regard the Shariah than all of the Ummat which followed them. No member of this Ummat, that followed them had surpassed them in knowledge, virtue, honour, trustworthiness,

understanding, foresight, abstinence, piety or recognition of Allaah Ta`ala. This is the reason why those pious personalities who are regarded as being bestowed with mountains of knowledge and oceans of Kashf and Ilhaam, are all the followers of these Aimmah-e-Ijtihaad. The mere fact that all these pious buzrugs follow these Aimmah is proof of their lofty status.

3. There were numerous Aimmah-e-Ijtihaad. But Allaah Ta`ala in His Infinite Wisdom has chosen and selected the Ijtihaad of four from amongst the multitudes in the Ummat – that is, Imaam Hadhrat Abu Hanifah, Imaam Shaafi`, Imaam Maalik and Imaam Ahmed Bin Hambal (rahmatullahi alaihim). After the fourth century, however many Ulama and mashaaikh there were, all of them followed one of these four Imaams. It was as though the entire Ummat were unanimous in following these noble personalities with regard to knowledge, virtue, etc. One will not find a single Aalim or buzrug, worth mentioning, who was not a follower of one of these Imaams.

4. There are numerous differences with regard to corollary Masaa`il between the Imaams. However, each one in his own right is on the Haqq. Therefore, for anyone to practise upon the pure Shariah, it will be inevitable to follow the Ijtihaad of one of these Imaams. But to slur and disrespect any one of them is not permissible. Because disrespect to any Aalim is in actual fact a degradation of Ilm. In the Sight of Allaah Ta`ala, disdain shown towards the Knowledge of Shariah is an unforgivable act.

5. The major part of the Shariah comprises of that upon which these Imaams are unanimous on. According to Shah Waliullaah Muhaddith Dehlwi (rahmatullahi alaih) if these pious personalities agree on any matter then it is a sign of 'Ijma`-e-Ummah'. That is, if these four Imaams are unanimous on any Mas`alah, then understand that right from the time of the Sahaabah-e-Kiraam (radhiAllaahu anhum) until the present day, the entire Ummat were unanimous upon this ruling. It is for this reason that it is not permissible to exceed any Mas`alah whereupon there is a consensus of the four Imaams. I always cite the example of the four high courts of Pakistan, that is if all of them rule unanimously on any particular promulgation, then its implementation become binding on all, and this ruling is accepted as being the most correct. No citizen of Pakistan then has the scope of changing this unanimous ruling. If any person does re-evaluate and change this ruling then no town in Pakistan will accept it. Understand the four Math-habs as being the four high courts of the Muslim Ummat. None has the right to exceed the unanimous ruling of these four.

The Hanafi-Wahaabi differences are of two types; the first being a difference in a few corollary Masaa`il, for example, where to place the hands in Salaat? How far apart must the feet be in Salaat? At which junctures must Raf`e Yadain (lifting hands to ears for different postures in Salaat) take place? Is "Ameen" to be said loudly of softly? Must Surah Faatihah be read behind the Imaam or not? Etc.

These type of Masaa`il, regardless of how many they are, I regard them as being corollary differences. It is necessary for each of these groups to practice upon whatever their research shows them. If the 'Ahle Hadith' are not satisfied with the research and rulings of our Imaam Hadhrat Abu Hanifah (rahmatullahi alaih), then why must they be forced to do so? The same applies to us, in that if we are not satisfied with their research and rulings, then it is not necessary for us to follow their rulings. Just as I had mentioned earlier on that such differences in corollary Masaa`il existed between the Sahaabah, Salf-e-Saaliheen and Aimmah-e-Mujtahiddeen. If such differences remain within their bounds then it is regarded as a blessing for the Ummat. Every Sunnah of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) is alive in some way or form in some group or the other – however I do not regard these differences to be in such a serious light that the one group foul-mouths the other or that the one group, due to these differences, condemns the other as being astray. If such extremities come about because of such differences, then it is no longer regarded as a mercy, but rather as a calamity. The practical strength of this Ummat will then be annihilated due to our wasting time in quibbling about such differences. If everything

remains within its prescribed limits and bounds then it will be fine. When they start transgressing these bounds then it becomes objectionable. This, then, is the condition with these corollaries.

The second type of difference between the Hanafis and Wahabis is that of 'theoretical differences'. In this regard I differ with the view of the Ahle Hadith (whom you refer to as 'Wahabis' and they are also usually referred to as 'Ghair Muqallid'). In fact, I regard their stand as being incorrect. In principle, there are two points to this difference; firstly, according to the Ahle Hadith, there is no need to follow any one specific Imaam, in fact (they believe) that every person should practice upon whatever he understands from the Qur`aan Majeed and Hadith. This Mas`alah is famous under the discussion of "Taqleed and abandoning of Taqleed". This is one issue with great diverse opinions. I will suffice on presenting just a few points in this regard:

(1). The meaning of Taqleed is to accept the ruling of some reliable and trustworthy person's research without making any investigation into the matter, seeking proofs. If one accepts and follows one person, and his views are not more trustable than another, then it is clear that it would be incorrect to follow to him. And if this person, whom one follows, is an expert in his field, then it would be totally incorrect for an ordinary person to seek proof from him. Understand this by the following example, assume you go to a doctor or specialist and he prescribes a treatment for you. But this doctor is not an expert in his field, in fact, he has merely acquired the practice, then in the first place it would be incorrect for you to have gone to him. And if this doctor is a qualified expert in his field, and then to investigate and query his every prescription and to debate it and seek proof for it, would be totally incorrect and unacceptable.

The reason being that an ordinary person would only go to an expert when his intellect, comprehension and understanding of the issue at hand are insufficient. In a similar way the matters of Deen and Shariah can be understood. Hence, those Masaa`il in the Deen which were transmitted authentically and continuously from Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), and which every Muslim knows about that this is the Mas`alah, in such matters it is not unnecessary for any person to go to any Aalim for clarification. With regard to Deeni Masaa`il, the only time it will be necessary to refer to the knowledgeable and learned ones will be when an issue is beyond the understanding and comprehension of laypeople like us. In such a case there are two possibilities; the first being that we open the Qur`aan Majeed and Hadith and seek the Mas`alah for ourselves, and whatever comes to our minds we accept as being 'Deen' and practice thereupon. The second option being that we refer to those persons who are expert at the Qur`aan Majeed and Hadith, and we rely on whatever ruling they issue which they have done after their expert reflection and understanding of the Qur`aan Majeed and Hadith and also their lengthy experience and foresight. The first option is one's own opinion and the second is called "Taqleed", which is the logical need of reasoning and the obvious solution.

To leave aside the research of the experts of Shariah and for a layman to seek for every ruling by contemplating on the Qur`aan Majeed and Hadith is like the similitude of a person who has a very complicating illness and he deems it to be below his dignity to refer to the experts in the medical field. So in order to alleviate and solve his problem he purchases the bests and most authentic books on the subject of medicine and he relies on his own understanding and research of these books and seeks a cure for his illness. I am quite certain that no intelligent person will resort to such foolishness. If any person is silly enough to carry out his treatment in this fashion, in that he does his own research and leaves aside the medical experts, then it is almost certain that he will never gain good health or a cure. In fact, he should first make arrangements for his burial before attempting to cure himself.

In a similar fashion, will a person who subjects the Deen to his own understanding fall into the pit of deviation and waywardness. It is for this reason that as many deviant sects we have before us are all the result of such abandonment of Taqleed and subjecting the Deen to whims and understandings.

The famous Ahle Hadith Aalim, the late Moulana Muhammed Hussein Bataalwi, mourns his concept of self-opinion and abandonment of Taqleed, stated so aptly:

"We have understood the following after 25 years of experience – those people who depart from general Taqleed and they become Mujtahid without having any knowledge, they ultimately end up 'saying goodbye' to Islaam. There are numerous reasons for kufr and irtidaad, but one of the main reasons for those who are Deen-conscious to lose their Deen is to abandon Taqleed notwithstanding their being bereft of any knowledge. Those amongst the Ahle Hadith who have little or no knowledge and claim to abandon general Taqleed, should fear such a result. Such a group will become free thinkers and self-opiniated." [Ishaa`anu Sunnah, number 4, vol.1]

(2). From this discussion the following question arises as to why an ordinary layman needs to make Taqleed of a specific Imaam? That person who has gained such expertise in the science of the Qur`aan Majeed and Ahaadith that he has attained the stage of making his own Ijtihaad, will no longer be regarded as a layman but a Mujtahid. For such a person it is not merely not necessary to make Taqleed of another expert in this field, in fact, it is not permissible. (However nowadays, students like us should not languish this false notion that we have become Mujtahid by seeking the assistance of the Urdu translated versions of the major Kitaabs).

And for that person who has not attained the rank of a Mujtahid, will remain a layman regardless of how many Kitaabs he has read. He will, however, have to refer to and consult the rulings of a Mujtahid. So, therefore, when a person has chosen a specific Imaam and he has faith in his (Imaam's) rulings and he practises thereupon, then he has fulfilled the duty and necessity that the Shariah has placed upon him. But, if he takes from another Imaam what suits him, then the question arises that what is the distinguishing factor which allows him to choose between what he likes and dislikes? If it is said that this person has made the Qur`aan Majeed and Hadith his distinguishing factor, and he opts for that ruling which (he finds to be) in conformity with the Qur`aan Majeed and Hadith, then in reality such a person has made his intellect the distinguishing factor. It is exactly for this reason we had outlined that for such a person who is an expert in the sciences of the Qur`aan Majeed and the Hadith and he is able to distinguish and find proof directly from theses sources, such a person is a Mujtahid himself and for him it is not permissible to make Taqleed of another expert. And if such a person is not an expert in the sciences of the Qur`aan Majeed and the Hadith and he uses his intellect as a distinguishing factor, then such a person is a one who follows his own base whims and fancies. This will lead to the destruction of his Deen.

(3). It was the habit of many Auliyaa-ullaah that they gather the statements and rulings of the Aimmah. They would then choose from all the rulings those rulings wherein there is the most precaution. For example, if according to one Imaam a certain thing was necessary and according to another it was not, so they would choose the ruling of necessity and practice thereupon. Also, for example, if a certain act was Makrooh according to one Imaam and not so according to another, then these personalities would opt for the ruling of Karaahat (being Makrooh) and consider it such, thereby abstaining from that thing. This is the sign of the true Allaah Ta`ala-fearing servants. However, nowadays, abstaining from any Math-hab means that a person would opt for that ruling which best suits his naffs and desires, and practice thereupon. This, in reality, is not following the Qur`aan Majeed and Hadith, it is following one's own desires and passions. Shaitaan has given it the hue of following the Qur`aan Majeed and Hadith.

(4). Shah Waliullaah Muhaddith Dehlwi (rahmatullahi alaih) stated that prior to the fourth century it was not a norm in any society to follow any specific Imaam. The custom in those days was such that if any person needed to know any Mas`alah, he would refer to an Aalim and get his answer, whereupon he would practice. However, after the fourth century, Allaah Ta`ala gathered the Ummat in making Iqtidaa (Taqleed) of the four Imaams. It was then understood to be necessary to make Taqleed of one of the four Imaams. During those times, there was much goodness in this. The reason being that the Taqwa and Allaah-fearing in the people became less and was steadily decreasing. If it was not necessary to make Taqleed of only one specific Imaam, then the masses would pick and choose between all the rulings and opt for what their fancies desire. The Deen would then have become a toy.

Hence, a cure for this 'personal opinion' was that every person chooses one expert in the Shariah and remains steadfast upon his rulings. This is what is termed "Taqleed-e-Shakhsi".

(5). The argument of the Ahle Hadith is that since the 'custom' of Taqleed came about after many centuries, therefore they say it is a 'Bid`ah'. However, it is their error to term Taqleed a Bid`ah, because firstly, if this was the case then the entire Ummat, besides the Ahle Hadith – who only sprang up around the thirteenth century – is astray, Nauthubillah! This is precisely the same claim and argument presented by the Shiahs with regard to the Sahaabah-e-Kiraam (radhiAllaahu anhum). Since, Islaam has come until the day of Qiyaamah, for anyone to accept that it did not exist for even one second, is spurious.

Secondly, this custom and habit existed even during the era of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) and the Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum), that if any ordinary person was unaware of a ruling he would refer to the learned, and he would practice thereupon without seeking any proof. This is what is termed as "Taqleed". Even though this system was not termed as Taqleed in those days, in practice it was exactly this. So, you also, do not call it "Taqleed", term it "Iqtidaa" or "Ittibaa".

Thirdly, let us assume that the pattern of Taqleed did not exist in those days, even then one cannot term it a Bid`ah. The reason being that it is Fardh for every person to follow the Deen and Shariah, and as I have illustrated above that nowadays if any person attempts to tread the path of the Shariah, without making Taqleed of a specific Imaam, then he is almost certain to fall prey to the snares of shaitaan and the naffs. Therefore, to tread the correct path of the Shariah, without any pitfalls, this is one of the only ways, that is, to make Taqleed of an expert Imaam of the Shariah. If one views the condition of the Ahle Hadith, then it will be see that besides a few Masaa`il, they follow the Muhadditheen. Even though they refute the term "Taqleed" they are also 'guilty' of this very same concept, without admitting to it. This Deen is not an invention of the mind and intellect; in fact, it is based upon Revelations and transmissions. For this chain of transmissions to remain intact, it is necessary for every latter generation to follow in the footsteps of their predecessors. This is a natural phenomenon, without which it would be difficult to tread upon the Shariah.

(6). The birthplace and origin of the Ahle Hadith is un-segregated India, the reason being that previously, the Hanafi Math-hab was widespread here. It is for this reason that all their objections, from the first to the last, is directed at the Hanafi Math-hab. This was not sufficient; they even attacked the personality of Hadhrat Imaam Hadhrat Abu Hanifah (rahmatullahi alaih).

I regard this attitude of theirs to be extremely destructive for themselves, because a significant sign of his lofty status and rank is that personalities such as Mujaddid Alfe Thaani and Shah Abdul Azeez Dehlwi (rahmatullahi alaihima) are amongst his Muqallideen. The objection and dissention of a few limited-intellect persons will make no difference to the loftiness of Imaam Saheb. However, the impending harm that is sure to befall people who slur and revile the Salf-e-Saaliheen is to their peril.

Another point of the theoretical differences of the Ahle Hadith, is that sometimes these people, through their enthusiasm of making their own Ijtihaad, tend to separate themselves from the Ijma (consensus) of the Ummat. Here I will quote two such examples:

a). You may be well aware that the practice of twenty Rakaats Taraaweeh Salaat has continued amongst the Ummat since the Khilaafat of Hadhrat Umar (radhiAllaahu anhu) until the present time. All the four Imaams of the Mathaa-hib are unanimous on this also, but the Ahle Hadith crowd have branded this practice a Bid`ah. Regarding this Mas`alah, I have heard with my own ears, some people using distasteful words for Hadhrat Umar (radhiAllaahu anhu).

b). The second example is that of three Talaaqs in one sentence. That is, if a husband gives his wife three Talaaqs in one sentence or one sitting, then all three Talaaqs will be effective. This Fatwa was passed by Hadhrat Umar (radhiAllaahu anhu) and all the Sahaabah and Tabieen accepted this ruling. I know of not a single Sahaabi or Tabiee who disagreed or differed with this ruling. This is also the unanimous ruling of all the four Mathaa-hib. However, the Ahle Hadith state very vociferously that in such a case only one Talaaq comes into effect.

In citing these two examples, I do not wish to discuss their objections and views, I am merely making this point that in such Masaa`il these Ahle Hadith people differ with the consensus of the Ummat and in doing so they bear a great similarity to the Shiahs. Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) had ordered the Ummat with following the path chalked out by the Khulafaa-e-Raashideen. This connection and string has slipped from their hands.

I deem the following scenario as being the root of deviation, that any ruling of the Sahaabah-e-Kiraam, Taabieen, Aimmah and pious predecessors of the Ummat is not regarded as being correct, and the so-called well-studied individuals of today regard their differences to the rulings of the pious predecessors as being more correct and their views as being authentic. Nauthubillah!

3). THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE DEOBANDIS AND BARELWIS

The third difference regarding which you have requested of me is that between the Deobandis and Barelwis, and you wanted to know which of these two are treading the path of Haqq.

To me the phrase “Deobandi-Barelwi difference” is surprising and odd. You have already heard that the difference between the Sunnis and Shiahs stemmed from the acceptance (of the one group) and rejection (by the other) of the Sahaabah-e-Kiraam (radhiAllaahu anhum) and that the difference between the Hanafis and Wahaabis originated from the following or not of the Aimmah-e-Mujtahiddeen. However, according to my knowledge there is no sound basis for any difference between the Deobandis and Barelwis. The reason being that both these groups are passionate followers of the Hanafi Math-hab. In so far as Aqaa`id both these groups accept and follow the teachings of Imaam Abul Hasan Ash`ari and Imaam Abu Mansoor Maaturidi (rahmatullahi alaihima). Both these groups accept and take ba`it to all four Silsilahs of Tasawwuf, viz. Qaadiri, Chisti, Saharwardi and Naqshbandi.

In short, both these groups are in all respects followers of the Ahle Sunnah Wal Jamaat. They also acknowledge to and accept the reverence of the Sahaabah, Tabieen and Aimmah-e-Mujtahiddeen. They are Muqallids of Hadhrat Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullahi alaih) and accept the authority right up to Mujaddid Alfe Thaani and Shah Abdul Azeez Muhaddith Dehlwi (rahmatullahi alaihima). They all also accept that being subservient to the Auliyaa of Allaah Ta`ala is the means of salvation in both the worlds. Therefore, in my opinion there is no real and genuine basis for any differences between theses two groups.

I do not refute the contention that there exists between these two groups some differences in a few Masaa`il. I will hereunder present the authentic Shar`i view in the light of the Qur`aan Majeed, Sunnah and Hanafi Fiqh of the Masaa`il wherein they differ, without making reference to any one of the two groups in particular.

Between these two groups there exist the following differences:

(1). Was Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) Noor (celestial light) or a human being?
(2). Was Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) knower of the unseen or not?
(3). Is our Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) all-seeing *(haazir-o-naazir)* or not?
(4). Has Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) complete choice and control or not? That is, has

Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) total control and choice in the workings of this universe or is this the sole responsibility of Allaah Ta`ala?

With regard to these Masaa`il, that group is on Haqq whose beliefs are in conformity with the Qur`aan Majeed, Sunnah of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), practices of the Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum) and the Fiqh of Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullahi alaih). The other group is in error. Now, very briefly, I will outline the differences between these two groups.

(1). NOOR OR HUMAN?

My belief regarding Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) is that he is not merely a human being, in fact, he is the best and the leader of the human species. He is not merely an offspring of Hadhrat Adam (alaihi salaam), he is, in fact, the best of all the children of Hadhrat Adam (alaihi salaam) – sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam – Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) himself said:

"I will be the leader of the children of Adam on the day of Qiyaamah."

The fact that he (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) is the best of man and humankind is not only a matter of honour and pride for himself, in fact, his being from amongst the human nation is a matter of envy for the angels.

Just like Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) belongs to the human species in so far as his creation is concerned, so too is he in the beacon of guidance for the entire human race in so far as his quality of guidance is concerned. This is the "Noor" by which humankind will find their path to Allaah Ta`ala. This light will remain until the day of Qiyaamah. Hence, my belief is that Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) is a combination of both human and Noor. In my opinion it is incorrect for anyone to separate and negate any one of these two attributes from him (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). To negate the attribute of humanness from Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) will be to, Nauthubillah, remove him from the circle of humanity. Whereas, there are numerous places in the Qur`aan Majeed where the Prophets are mentioned as being from amongst mankind. The Ahle Sunnah Wal Jamaat is unanimous on this fact that all the Ambiyaa (alaihimus salaam) were sent from only mankind. The definition of a prophet is as stated in the famous Ahle Sunnah Wal Jamaat Aqaa`id Kitaab, *"Shar`e Aqaa`id Nasafi"*:

"(A Prophet is) That human being, who was sent by Allaah Ta`ala to convey the Message and Injunctions."

It is stated in the famous Hanafi Kitaab *"Fataawa Aalimgiri"*, on page 363, vol.2, citing reference from *"Fusool Amaawiyah"*: *"That person who says that he does not know whether Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) is a human or jinn, is not a Muslim."* In short, the fact that Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) is a human being is such an irrefutable reality which no person in his right senses can deny.

We sometimes hear people saying that Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) is a Noor from the Noor of Allaah Ta`ala and he is merely clothed in the façade of humanness. Some even aver that between the words *"Ahmad"* and *"Ahad"*, only the letter *Meem* comes in between. Nauthubillah, this is exactly the same belief that Christians hold regarding Hadhrat Isaa (alaihi salaam), that he is a deity in the form of a man. There is absolutely no scope or leeway in Islaam for such spurious and useless beliefs. What can be more nonsensical and absurd as saying that the servant and Allaah Ta`ala are one and the same. The previous Ummats have spoilt their Deen due to such baseless beliefs.

Our Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) had feared this same fate for his Ummat and has forewarned them saying: ***"Do not exceed the bounds in praising me like the Christians have done with Isaa in that they elevated him to***

being Allaah and Allaah's son. I am the servant and messenger of Allaah Ta`ala. Refer to me as the servant and messenger of Allaah Ta`ala." [Bukhari, page 1009, vol. 2]

Owing to this sanctified statement, my belief is that the qualities, attributes and perfection of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) over the rest of mankind supersedes them by far. There is no human who is equal to him (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). Nevertheless, he (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) was a human and not a deity. This is the teaching of Islaam and my Imaan is on this.

(2). KNOWER OF THE UNSEEN

My belief is this that Allaah Ta`ala had bestowed Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) with such knowledge which He had not granted to any other prophet or angel. In fact, the knowledge of all the creation from the first to the last is like a mere drop compared to the ocean of Rasulullaah's (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) knowledge. Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) was bestowed with whatever knowledge that was appropriate for his status with regard to the Being and Attributes of Allaah Ta`ala, countless past and future incidents, the condition of the grave and Barzakh, the condition of the Day of Qiyaamah and the condition of Jannat and Jahannum. The estimation of all this, none knows besides Allaah Ta`ala.

Together with this, my belief is that just as the knowledge of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) is incomparable to that of the entire creation, in similar manner is the knowledge of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) incomparable to that of the All-Encompassing Knowledge of Allaah Rabbul Izzat.

It is reported in Bukhari Shareef that once Hadhrat Khidr (alaihi salaam) was sitting on the seaside and he saw a little sparrow place its beak into the ocean and he commented to Hadhrat Moosa (alaihi salaam):

"My knowledge and your knowledge compared to the Knowledge of Allaah Ta`ala is not even equal to the amount of water that was decreased from the ocean on the (beak of that) bird."

This example is merely for our understanding, in reality, can this limited knowledge of man never be compared to the unlimited Knowledge of Allaah Ta`ala? [Bukhari footnote, page 482, vol.1]

It for this reason that on numerous occasions in the Qur`aan Majeed the word *"Aalimul Ghaib" (Knower of the Unseen)* is attributed to Allaah Ta`ala. Likewise there are numerous places where the quality of *"Aalimul Ghaib"* has been negated for Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam).

In the beginning of the 20th Para, it is stated after the many Attributes of Allaah Ta`ala had been enumerated:

"Say (O Nabi - sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), none in the heavens and earth knows the unseen, except Allaah and none has the slightest idea when the resurrection will take place."

Similarly, there are numerous Ahaadith wherein the same subject is discussed. If one has to compile all these Aayaat and Ahaadith, then even a voluminous Kitaab will prove insufficient. It is the accepted belief of the Ahle Sunnah Wal Jamaat that it is totally incorrect to regard anyone else besides Allaah Ta`ala as *Aalimul Ghaib*. Hadhrat Aishah (radhiAllaahu anha) states: ***"That person who avers that Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) knows the unseen, has in actual fact levelled a great slander upon Allaah Ta`ala."*** [Bukhari / Mishkaat page 501]

The following Mas`alah is recorded in the famous Hanafi Kitaabs: *"That person who has made Nikah with a woman without having any witnesses and he says: 'We make Allaah Ta`ala and His Rasool our witnesses', (such a*

person) becomes a kaafir." [Fataawa Aalimgiri, page 266, vol. 2]. It is further stated that the reason being such a person regards Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) as being *Aalimul Ghaib*, which is a kufr belief. [Fataawa Qaadhi Khaan, from the footnote of Aalimgiri, page 234, vol.1 / Bahrur Raa`iq, page 88, vol.3]

Some people aver with great impudence and audacity that Allaah Ta`ala is not *Aalimul Ghaib* and Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) is. Listening to such kufr statements makes one's hair stand on end. In reality such miscreants do not even know the meaning of *Aalimul Ghaib*.

It is stated in the famous Hanafi Tafseer *Madaarik*:

"Ghaib: It is that upon which there is no proof, and no creation knows anything about it."

Hence, that knowledge which the prophets are made aware of by means of Wahi (Divine Revelation), and which Auliyaa are made aware of by way of Ilhaam or Kashf, is not termed as '*Ghaib'.*

In conclusion, we say that the knowledge of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) is so vast that no human or angel has the ability to comprehend or attain. But, at the same time, this knowledge of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) is incomparable to that of Allaah Ta`ala. It is not correct, in the light of the Qur`aan Majeed, Ahaadith or Hanafi Fiqh to attribute the quality of *Aalimul Ghaib* to any other besides Allaah Ta`ala.

(3). ALL-SEEING (Haazir-o-Naazir)

Prior to discussing this point, one needs to reflect upon the term '*haazir-o-naazir'.* These are both Arabic words which translate as *"one who is present and looking"*. And if one combines these two word, they would imply *"That being whose presence is not restricted to one specific place, in fact, his presence at one and the same time encompasses the entire universe and is aware and looks at every particle from the first to the last."*

My belief is that the term *haazir-o-naazir* can only be attributed to the Being of Allaah Ta`ala and none else. This is His exclusive attribute. Regarding our Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), everyone is well aware that his body rests in his blessed grave. His admirers the world over, come there to visit him. Hence, this belief that Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) is present all over and he sees every atom of the universe is spurious to any sane mind. This quality is exclusive to Allaah Ta`ala and it is totally incorrect to ascribe it to anyone else.

If the ascribers to the belief of *haazir-o-naazir* aver that it means that after the demise of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) his blessed soul was granted the permission to roam freely, then this does not establish his being *haazir-o-naazir*. In Pakistan (and every other country) the citizens are allowed to go anywhere in the country they please, so does this consent imply that every citizen of Pakistan is *haazir-o-naazir*? If a person has the permission to go to a certain place does not imply that this person is present at that place. Besides this, if one avers regarding a certain place (for example say Karachi) that Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) is present there, then this is such a claim which warrants proof. This is such a claim which has no basis in the Shariah, hence to make such a claim and hold such a belief without citing any proof is not correct. Some insane people do not only hold this belief regarding Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), they believe that many Auliyaa are *haazir-o-naazir*. I am astonished at the 'generosity' of such people. They are so liberal with the Attributes of Allaah Ta`ala that they share it out freely amongst the creation! Nevertheless, this intrepidity and audaciousness is totally unacceptable to the Aimmah of the Ahle Sunnah. It is stated in *Fataawa Bazaazia:*

"Our Ulama state that whoever avers that the souls of the Mashaaikh are present and listening has committed KUFR." [Footnote of Aalimgiri, page 326, vol.6]

(4). FREE WILL AND CHOICE

A clear result of establishing divine qualities for Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) would be to liken him and grant him a share in divinity. Due to this some people aver that Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) has control over the doings of the universe and that Allaah Ta`ala had given Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) complete choice and will in the running of the universe.

Owing to this claim people have given Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) the title of '*Mukhtaar-e-Kul'*. However, in the light of the Qur`aan Majeed, Sunnah and beliefs of the Ahle Sunnah, there is absolutely no scope or proof for such claims, that Allaah Ta`ala had granted Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) or anyone else total or part choice and will in the running of the universe. The Aqaa`id of Islaam is that Only Allaah Ta`ala and none else has control and power over the universe. In this, He has no partner or helper. Death, life, health, sickness, etc. everything is totally in His Control. This is precisely the reason why every prophet from the time of Hadhrat Aadam (alaihi salaam) until Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), every one of them supplicated and pleaded to Allaah Ta`ala and all of them understood that He Alone was the Owner of benefit and harm. This was also the condition of every Auliyaa of Allaah Ta`ala. No Nabi, Wali, Sadeeq or Shaheed ever made this claim that he be granted or was granted control over the universe. Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) himself held the following belief:

"Hadhrat Ibn Abbaas (radhiAllaahu anhu) said: 'Once I was saddled behind Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) and he said to me: 'O son! You protect the rights of Allaah, and Allaah Ta`ala will protect you. You protect the rights of Allaah and you will find Him by your side. When you are need of something then ask from Allaah Ta`ala. When you are in need of assistance, then seek assistance only from Allaah Ta`ala. And have firm faith that if the entire creation gathers in order to benefit you, then they will not be able to benefit you one bit, except what Allaah Ta`ala had decreed for you. And if the entire creation gathers to harm you, then they will never be able to harm you one bit, except what Allaah Ta`ala had decreed for you." [Mishkaat Shareef, page 453]

Sheikh Ali Qaari (rahmatullahi alaih) states in commentary of this Hadith:

""Ask of Allaah", i.e. ask only of Allaah Ta`ala, because the treasures of giving is totally in His Control. The keys for giving and granting lies only in His Hands. Every benefit or harm which reaches the servant or warded off from him, whether it be in this world or hereafter, are all owing to His Mercy without any intermediaries or means. This is so because He is The Generous One. He is so Independent that He requires none. It is for this reason that one should only have hopes in His Mercy. All one's great desires and needs should be presented in His Court and trust on any matter should only be on His Being. Besides Him do not ask of anyone, because besides Him, none else has the power to give, nor to prevent, nor to ward off difficulties, nor benefit. Besides Him none else has even the ability or choice over good or evil for themselves. Nor does anyone, besides Him, have the choice of life, death or even standing up."

Further on, he writes, commenting on *"Entire creation":*

" 'Indeed the entire Ummat', i.e. the entire creation. If the special servants of Allaah Ta`ala, the general public, the Ambiyaa, Auliyaa and the entire Ummat, in essence, are unanimous in that they wish to benefit you in a certain thing, whether it be a worldly thing or something for the hereafter, then they will not have the power or ability to benefit you." [Mirqaatul Mafaateeh, page 91, vol. 5]

Hadhrat Abdul Qaadir Jilaani (rahmatullahi alaih) states in '*Al-Fathur Rabbaani'*, majlis 61:

"Indeed the creation is helpless and incapable. They have neither destruction nor ownership in their hands, neither wealth nor poverty, neither harm nor benefit. None has any ownership except Allaah Ta`ala. There is no power but

His. There is no giver, preventer, harmer or benefactor but Him. There is none who can give life or death but Him."

This is the belief of ***all*** the Auliyaa of Allaah Ta`ala and elders of the Ahle Sunnah Wal Jamaat. Those miracles of the Ambiyaa and Karaamaat of the Auliyaa, which manifested at their hands was in actual fact the doing of Allaah Ta`ala via them. This is the reason why they are called *Mu`jizah* and *Karaamat.* To see a *Mu`jizah* or *Karaamat* and to interpret it as being a partnership in divinity or has having a choice in the administration of the universe, is sheer stupidity. This is the self-same stupidity that led the Christians into taking Hadhrat Isaa (alaihi salaam) as a deity when they saw his miracles (example, giving life to the dead). The main and prime objective and message of every prophet was to invite towards the Oneness of Allaah Ta`ala, in His Being, Qualities and Actions. There are many proofs that are forwarded in the Qur`aan Majeed on numerous occasions and ways proving the Oneness of Allaah Ta`ala. Amongst them are: ***"Say! Who is the controller of the universe?" "Who grants sustenance?" "In whose control is death, life, health and sickness?" "Who is the owner of benefit and harm?"*** etc., etc. – it is clear and evident that if all these things are attributed to others besides Allaah Ta`ala then at last 1/3 of the Qur`aan Majeed would be Baatil. Here it would also be prudent to remember that with regard to the Injunctions of Allaah Ta`ala they are categorised into two sections; one is regarding the laws of Shariah which the Ambiyaa (alaihimus salaam) teach and demonstrate to their Ummats. The second is regarding the creation, which applies to every creation in the universe. Just like none is free from the injunctions of the Shariah, regardless of how close he/she may be to Allaah Ta`ala, so too, is none excluded from accepting the matters and injunctions regarding creation. None, regardless of whether he is in the heavens or earth, whether it is an angel or a prophet, everyone are subjected to the system of Allaah Ta`ala in so far as the administration of the universe is concerned. Everyone is subject to His Decree and Destiny. Some people transfer the administration of the universe to Auliyaa and Ambiyaa, whereas those very personalities to whom Allaah Ta`ala had granted His recognition, have never laid claim to this partnership. They maintained that everything in the total control of Allaah Ta`ala Rabbul Izzat. Hence, to regard these personalities as having control in the universe is to contradict their very teachings and beliefs!

These four Masaa`il (discussed above) are the important ones which are related to Aqaa`id. Besides these there are a few others also, wherein there are differences. I will also briefly enumerate on these.

(5). TO CALL UPON SOMEONE OTHER THAN ALLAAH TA`ALA

Amongst this is the one pertinent question as to whether it is permissible to say *"Yaa Rasulullaah!"* or not? My opinion on the matter is that there are numerous occasions and manners in which one says *"Yaa Rasulullaah",* and the ruling for each one differs. For example, one way is when a poet who in his poetical imagination addresses perhaps the mountains, a jungle, or some animal, etc. In this way he is not really talking to the thing he is addressing, his speech to and he does not have this belief that the addressee is listening to him or will answer, this is merely a way of expressing his emotions. If in such circumstances the poet remembers the name of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) and addresses him, then my opinion is that it will be permissible and correct.

The second way is when a person addresses his beloved. In this manner if a person calls out to Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) to express his love for him (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), where his object is not to actually call Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), as though he is speaking to him. Or like when a mother who had lost her child calls out the child's name, knowing full well that the child will not hear her call in his grave, but this is merely her way of giving vent to her emotions. This is like an instinctive and involuntary action, spurred by love and emotion. In similar manner, if a person calls out to Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) out of love for him, knowing and believing that his call will not reach the grave of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), then such a call would be permissible, provided there is no disorder in his Aqaa`id.

Another way is when a person says Durood in the specific form of *"As-Salaatu was Salaamu Alaika Yaa Rasulullaah",* believing that the specially appointed angels of Allaah Ta`ala will convey this Durood to Nabi's (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) grave. This act would also not be regarded as impermissible, because Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) said:

"Whosoever sends Durood at my graveside, I hear him, and whoever sends Durood on me from afar, it is conveyed to me." [Mishkaat Shareef, page 87]

It is reported in another Hadith:

"Indeed there are some angels of Allaah Ta`ala who traverse the earth and convey to me the salaams of my Ummat." [Ibid. page 86]

Another Hadith states:

"Do not make our homes graves and do not make my grave an object of festivities. Send Durood upon me, because indeed your Durood is conveyed to me wherever you are." [Ibid]

Although the correct way will be to recite Durood Shareef in the methods and words taught to us by Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) and not to use the terms of addressing him directly, nevertheless, if one uses the words *Yaa Rasulullaah* in this context without there being any fear of one's Aqaa`id spoiling or that of another who is listening being spoilt, then such words cannot be regarded as impermissible.

The fourth way is to say *Yaa Rasulullaah* and to harbour this belief that just as Allaah Ta`ala listens to every word all the time, since He is Omnipresent, so too one believes Nabi's (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) condition (that he is *haazir-o-naazir)*, then in such a case I regard this to be totally impermissible.

Such a belief, as mentioned before is incorrect and there is neither consent nor leeway for it in the Qur`aan Majeed nor the Sunnah nor the beliefs of the Ahle Sunnah. Since the general masses have scant regard for the limits of the Shariah, the Salf-e-Saaliheen have exercised great caution in such matters. It is reported from Hadhrat Abdullaah Bin Mas`ood (radhiAllaahu anhu) in Bukhari Shareef:

"As long as Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) was present in our midst, we used to say 'Assalaamualaika Ayyuhan Nabi', when reciting Attahiyaat. But after his demise we replaced these words with 'Alan Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam)'." [page 926, vol.2]

The object of the Sahaabah-e-Kiraam (radhiAllaahu anhum) was to show that in the 'Attahiyaat' the words which indicated to Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) being directly addressed was not indicative or based on this belief that he (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) was omnipresent and that he heard the words of every person. --- No! In fact this Salaam (in 'Attahiyaat') refers to the Speech of Allaah Ta`ala which He Spoke when Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) went for Mi`raaj.

The fifth way is when one who visits the grave of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) and he says *As-Salaatu Was Salaamu Alaika Yaa Rasulullaah.* Since Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) is alive in his grave and he hears and replies to every visitor who makes salaam to him, in such an instance, it is not only permissible to say this, in fact it is commendable.

These are the few ways and manners of saying *Yaa Rasulullaah* which I have enumerated upon and given my view on each. Now those people who say *Yaa Rasulullaah,* what are their intentions when saying it and what is their object? The conclusion to this you can draw for yourself. However, it is important that I draw your attention here to

two Mas`alahs. The first being that the Shiahs have initiated the *'Na`ra haidari: Yaa Ali'*. In aping them some people have now formulated *'Na`ra-e-Risaalat: Yaa Rasulullaah',* and *'Na`ra-e-Ghauthia: Yaa Ghauth!'* However, I have never come across anyplace from Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) or the Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum) where they have coined a Na`ra (slogan) to replace *Allaahu Akbar*. This is not mentioned anywhere in the Qur`aan Majeed, Sunnah or Fiqh of Hanafi. Hence, I regard this as being an emulation of the Shiahs, from which the Ahle Sunnah Wal Jamaat is completely free.

The other Mas`alah is that just as in the way of dua and to gain nearness to Allaah Ta`ala one calls out to Him and recites Wazifahs (incantations) using His Pure Name, similarly, some people use the names of some Buzrugs (pious people) and call out to them and recite incantations. This is completely impermissible in Islaam. The reason being that such actions fall under the scope of Ibaadat and all Ibaadat is purely for the Sake of Allaah Ta`ala. Neither Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), nor the Sahaabah nor any pious predecessor used the name of any other being besides Allaah Ta`ala for the recitation of any incantations. Hadhrat Qaadhi Thanaaullaah Paani Pati Hanafi (rahmatullahi alaih) states:

"It is not permissible to make Thikr with the name of any of the Auliyaa as a Wazifah or as a means of achieving any objective or need, like how the ignorant one do."[Irshaadut Taalibeen, quoted from Al-Jannatu Li Ahlis Sunnati, page 7]

(6). TAWASSUL AND DUA

A delicate point and issue arises as to the validity of making *tawassul* (means of mediation) by using the names Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) and or pious predecessors. My opinion on this matter is that it is permissible to use Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), Ambiyaa (alaihimus salaam), the Sahaabah-e-Kiraam (radhiAllaahu anhum) or any other pious predecessor as a means of mediation in dua. The manner of doing this will be to say: *O Allaah! Through the mediation of so and so pious accepted servant of yours, accept my dua, or fulfil my certain need.*

Some Ulama have refuted such mediation. They aver that one should offer some good deed that one may have done and use this as a mediation in dua. Just as was done in the incident of the 'People of the cave', which is an incident regarding three persons who were trapped in a cave and each made a dua using a good deed of his in order for their release. This is reported in a Hadith which appears in Bukhari Shareef on page 493, vol.1. To use the name of any person is not permissible as a mediation (according to these Ulama). Some personalities aver that it is permissible to use the name of a living person as a means of mediation as was done by Hadhrat Umar (radhiAllaahu anhu) who used the name of Hadhrat Abbaas (radhiAllaahu anhu) as a mediation in a dua, as is reported in Bukhari Shareef on page 137, vol.1. these Ulama say that it is impermissible to use the names of those who have already passed away.

However, I am in disagreement with these views, because dua is in actual fact not made ***to*** these personalities rather it is made directly to Allaah Ta`ala. So if one uses any accepted personality as a means of mediation then it would be permissible regardless of whether he is alive or not. Also, if it is permissible to use one's good actions a mediation, then so too would it be permissible to use the name of a pious personality who is accepted in the Eyes of Allaah Ta`ala. Because in reality one would make the following dua: *O Allaah! I do not have any deed that it worthy of presenting in Your Court, wherewith I may use as a mediation. However a certain personality is accepted by You. I have an affinity and inclination towards him. Therefore, O Allaah! Please consider this relation that I have for this pious servant of Yours and accept this request of mine."* Therefore in reality, you are using the connection you have with this accepted servant of Allaah Ta`ala as a mediation. In fact, in my opinion there is more humility and servitude in such a dua, since the supplicater makes dua without pinning any hope on his own

actions and not having reliance on his own deeds. He does not regard any action of his as being worthy for presenting in the Court of Allaah Ta`ala.

Nevertheless, such a mediation is acceptable and is reported from the pious predecessors and was amongst their habits.

However, one should not hold this belief --- that the dua which is made without making *Tawassul* is not accepted by Allaah Ta`ala. One should also not hold this belief that it is imperative for Allaah Ta`ala to accept the dua which is made through the mediation of the Ambiyaa and Auliyaa. No! One should have this belief that there is a better hope of acceptance for a dua is it is made through the mediation of some accepted servant of Allaah Ta`ala. The Mas`alah which is reported in the Hanafi Kitaabs is as follows:

"It is Makrooh to say in a dua: 'Owing to the rights of so and so', or 'Because of the right of Your Ambiyaa and Rusul'. This is so because no creation has a right which is binding upon the Creator." [Hidaaya, page 475, part 4]

The object of this statement is as I had outlined above. If someone makes a dua through the *waseelah* of some pious personality, believing its acceptance to be binding upon Allaah Ta`ala is not permissible, because no servant has any right which is binding upon Allaah Ta`ala. Whatever has been granted to the creation by this Most Merciful Creator, is purely owing to His Beneficence, otherwise no creation has any rights over Him.

THE SECOND TYPE OF WASEELAH:

Some people understand *waseelah* to be such that since they feel that their dua are ineffective and does not reach Allaah Ta`ala, so they make dua to the pious personalities and present their requests to these accepted servants of Allaah Ta`ala. So such people make dua to the pious and they harbour this belief that these personalities will fulfil their needs. I have seen many people make such duas at the gravesites of many pious Akaabireen. I deem such actions to be the result of pure ignorance. Such acts are in reality the combination of two errors.

Firstly, theses people are equating and regarding the Court of Allaah Ta`ala as they do that of worldly rulers. Just as a person feels that he cannot approach or place a request directly to worldly king and has to rely on the ministers and other intermediaries in order to get across to the king, so too do they seek intermediaries in order to make requests from Allaah Ta`ala.

However, to equate and make an analogy of Allaah Ta`ala to the worldly kings is completely and totally incorrect. The need for intermediaries between a worldly king and his subjects becomes necessary because a worldly king cannot listen to all his subjects and the complaints and request of all his subjects do not reach his attention all the time. On the other hand, the condition of Allaah Ta`ala is such that He Hears and pays attention to every sound of every human, jinn and animal, such that when He listens to each of them it is as though everyone else is silent, and it is only this one person who is talking to Him. It is reported in a Hadith that Allaah Ta`ala Hears the sound of even the tiniest, blackest ant, which walks under the largest and heaviest rock on the darkest night.

Hence, it is not possible for a worldly king to listen to each of his subjects. But Allaah Ta`ala is even more closer to each of His servants than their jugular veins. Once the Sahaabah-e-Kiraam (radhiAllaahu anhum) asked Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam):

"Is our Rabb close by that we need to whisper to Him or is He far away such we need to call out to Him (loudly)?"

Upon this the Qur`aanic Aayat was revealed:

"And when My servants ask you regarding Me, indeed I am close by, I reply to the dua of the supplicator when he supplicates to Me." [Surah Baqarah, 186]

Reflect! That Court (of Allaah Ta`ala), where every sound is heard at every second, and one may present one's requests. Where one's supplications are immediately entertained, by One Who has the Full Power to fulfil every request of every person, and Who is actually waiting in expectation for His servants to make requests. Now, is it not pure idiocy and plain insanity for anyone to leave and abandon this Court of the Most Merciful and Generous and run from door to door begging and asking others? The condition of Allaah Ta`ala's Court is such:

"Whoever desires may come, and
Whoever desires may leave.
In His Court there are no formalities, nor
The need for a doorkeeper."

Another misconception of these people is that they regard the system of the Allaah Ta`ala to be like that of worldly kings and rulers, where they have officers and governors who have been vested with powers and can execute rules and govern without (necessarily) referring back to the king. These people assume that Allaah Ta`ala had vested choice and some power to His prophets, Walis, Imaams and martyrs. And that these personalities have a free choice in some matters and distribution. Whoever they desire to give they give and whoever they do not desire to give they do not.

However, this misconception is even more grave than the previous one. The reason why the worldly kings and rulers grant their governors, etc. a certain degree of power and choice is due to their (rulers') weakness, limits and incapabilities. They are in need of the assistance of others in order to fulfil the needs and duties of the entire domain. It would be impossible for them to rule efficiently over the entire land without the assistance of the governors, etc. Contrary to this, Allaah Ta`ala has Knowledge and Power over every atom (to the smallest degree) of the entire universe. Not even the smallest particle in this universe is beyond His knowledge, or free from His Decree. Every single thing in this entire universe is dependent on His power and Control so much so that not even a leaf rustles in a tree without His Command. It is for this reason that He requires no deputy or mites to assist in any sphere. He has never given nor will give anyone the choice to control or administer the universe.

Hadhrat Thanaaullaah Paani Pati Hanafi (rahmatullahi alaih) states:

"Mas`alah: If any person says that Allaah Ta`ala and His Rasool are witness in a certain act, then that person becomes a kaafir (because such a person has regarded Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) as Aalim-e-Ghaib). The Auliyaa of Allaah do not have the ability or power to bring a non-existent thing into existence nor to make an existing thing non-existent. Hence to relate to them the power of bringing into existence and taking out of existence, sustenance, granting of children, removing and averting illness and hardships, etc. is an act of kufr. Allaah says: 'Say (O Muhammad – sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam)! I do not have the power to benefit or harm my own self, except what Allaah Wills.'" [Irshaadut Taalibeen, page 18]

Hence, this misconception that the creation also has the ability and is able to grant things side by side with The Creator, is completely incorrect, right from its inception.

In summary, to believe that *waseelah* means that one presents one's needs and requests directly to the accepted servants of Allaah Ta`ala and ask of them is completely wrong and unacceptable. The Qur`aan Majeed has clearly stated that the worst of deviation is to call upon the creation and make dua unto them for one's needs. Allaah Ta`ala states:

"And who is more astray than the one who makes dua to any other besides Allaah, to one who cannot answer to it (your calls) until the day of Qiyaamah. Theses people are completely unwary of their duas." [Surah Al-Ahqaaf, 46]

Another reason for the total impermissibility of making dua to buzrugs for one's needs, is that dua is one of the highest forms of Ibaadat. Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) has stated:

"Dua is the core of all Ibaadat." [Tirmidhi]

It is reported in another Hadith:

"Dua is a Ibaadat. (Saying this) Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) recited: 'And your Rabb Says: 'Make dua unto Me, I answer you.'" [Mishkaat, page 194]

It is stated in another Hadith:

"Nothing is more honourable in the Sight of Allaah Ta`ala than dua." [Ibid.]

Sheikh Abdul Haqq Muhaddith Dehlwi (rahmatullahi alaih) states in commentary of these Ahaadith that dua is amongst the highest form of Ibaadaat and it is the core of Ibaadat because, the summary of Ibaadat is : *"To display utmost respect, humility and humbleness in front of The Creator."* This definition is found almost in totality in dua. Based upon this, dua is amongst the most appreciated acts of worship in the Court of Allaah Ta`ala. [Footnote of Mishkaat]

Nevertheless, since this much is now clear that dua is not merely an act of Ibaadat, in fact, it is the core and basis of Ibaadat, hence, to make Ibaadat to any other besides Allaah Ta`ala is completely not permissible. In the same way to make dua to any pious personality is also impermissible. The reason being that this (dua) is an Ibaadat and Ibaadat is exclusively for Allaah Ta`ala.

Hadhrat Qaadhi Thanaaullaah Hanafi (rahmatullahi alaih) states:

*"Mas`alah: It is not permissible to make dua to buzrugs who have passed away or living or to Ambiyaa (alaihimus salaam). Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) said that dua is the core of Ibaadat, and then Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) recited this Aayat: '**And your Rabb Says: 'Make dua unto Me, I answer you. Indeed those people who are proud (refrain) from My Ibaadat soon they will enter Jahannum disgraced.'** And the statement of the ignorant ones is: 'Yaa sheikh Abdul Qaadir Jilaani shay`an lillaah' and 'Yaa Khwajah Shamsuddin Paani Pati shay`an lillaah' is not permissible. In fact, it is shirk (polytheism) and kufr. But if someone says: 'Yaa Ilaahi, through the mediation of Khwajah Shamsuddin Paani Pati, fulfil the following need of mine', then it will be correct."* [Irshaadut Taalibeen, page 18]

Allaah Ta`ala states:

"Those whom you call upon besides Allaah are also servants (of Allaah Ta`ala) just like you. What power and ability do they have to fulfil any need?"

A THIRD TYPE OF WASEELAH

A third type of benefiting from waseelah is to request the Buzrug to make dua to Allaah Ta`ala on one's behalf. This type is more or less in between the previous two types. The first type is to make dua directly to Allaah Ta`ala using the name of an accepted servant of Allaah Ta`ala. The second type is to make one's dua and request to the buzrug. The third type is when one is aware that Allaah Ta`ala be asked directly, but one asks a pious person to make the dua unto Allaah Ta`ala on one's behalf.

The ruling of this is, that to ask another to make dua for one is in reality the essence of Sunnah. All the Muslims from the time of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) until the present, ask one another for duas. What remains is the question as to whether it is permissible or not for a person to go the grave of a pious person and ask him to make dua for one. Before understanding this, one has to firstly consider the following points:

Firstly, the logical reasoning behind addressing any person is that the person must be able to listen to what we are saying. Now the Mas`alah arises as to whether the inmates of the grave can hear or not? There is a famous chapter which appears in our Kitaabs, captioned *"Simaa` Mautaa"* (The listening of the dead). There has always been a difference of opinion amongst the Sahaabah regarding this topic. Some rule in the affirmative and others in the negative. Both sides comprise of great, great luminaries. We cannot give a clear ruling on this matter, since any matter wherein the Sahaabah-e-Kiraam differed, is considered such that one cannot say that one of the two sides are on the Haqq and the other on Baatil. Hence, those who aver that the dead can hear, they say that one can speak to the dead (at the graveside) and those who have the differing view hold the opinion that one cannot address the dead.

Secondly, this question arises as to whether the pious predecessors used to ask and make requests of the dead or not? The answer to this is quite clear that those who held the view that the dead cannot hear, most certainly did not carry out such actions. As for those who held the view that the dead could hear, I have never heard of any one of them carrying out such an action (i.e. asking and making requests of the dead at their gravesides). It has been reported that Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) requested of Hadhrat Umar (radhiAllaahu anhu), when the latter was off for Umrah: ***"O my brother! Do not forget us in your duas."*** [Masnad-e-Ahmad, page 39, vol. 1 / page 59, vol.2]

However it has never been reported from Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) that he ever went to the grave of any prophet or truthful person and asked any of them to make dua for him. Similarly, the Sahaabah and the Taabieen, also used to request for duas amongst each other. However, it has never been reported from any of them that they went to the grave of a Shaheed and requested him for duas. It is reported in the Fataawa of Shah Abdul Azeez Dehlwi (rahmatullahi alaihi):

> *"Seeking the assistance of the dead, whether it is done at their gravesides or in their absence, is undoubtedly Bid`ah. This was never the habit during the eras of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) and the Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum). However, there is a difference of opinion as to whether this is a Bid`ah-e-Sayyi-a (evil innovation) or Bid`ah-e-Hasanah (virtuous innovation, so depending on the type of assistance sought, the ruling regarding each one will differ."* [Fataawa Azeezi, page 89, vol.1]

Thirdly, can permissibility be granted for it, considering that there is doubt as to its validity or permissibility and also that it was never the practice of any of the pious predecessors? The answer to this is that such practices are termed as *"Bid`ah"*. Based on this, Hadhrat Shah Saheb (rahmatullahi alaih) has termed it as *"undoubtedly Bid`ah."* Insha-Allaah, I will elaborate further on *"Sunnah and Bid`ah"* a little later on in this book. However, I wish to clarify here that whatever our pious predecessors have not regarded as a virtuous act, there can be no scope for it in the Shariah. Regarding such matters, Imaam Rabbaani Mujaddid Alfe Thaani (rahmatullahi alaih) has stated:

"This humble servant does not differentiate between Bid`ahs and regard any as being virtuous or luminary. Besides, darkness and deviation, I see nothing else in Bid`ahs." [Maktoobaat Imaam Rabbaani, page 186]

Thereafter, after quoting the Hadith of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) that every new innovation in the Deen is a Bid`ah and every Bid`ah is astray, he states:

"Hence, since every innovation in the Deen is a Bid`ah and every Bid`ah is astray, what is the meaning of virtuousness or goodness in a Bid`ah?" [Ibid.]

It is the opinion of this useless servant that these words of Hadhrat Mujaddid (rahmatullahi alaih) be written in gold, and that it be regarded as the 'Final Word' in this matter.

Nevertheless, to go to the grave of the deceased personalities and ask them to make dua for one, is a doubtful and dubious act. Hence, I deem it as clearly ridiculous and insane to make dua at the gravesides and unnecessarily abandon the easy and simple method or asking directly from Allaah Ta`ala, when He has given the assurance that He will accept the duas of the one who makes it and that He is actually waiting expectantly for us to make dua unto Him. Also, considering the fact that Hadhrat Mujaddid (rahmatullahi alaih) has branded such acts as dark and deviating Bid`ahs, and also, whereupon there is doubt as to its permissibility or not.

At this juncture, I would like to clarify a certain point --- this entire discussion is regarding the non-prophets. Regarding the Ambiyaa (alaihi salaam), especially, our Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) my belief is that he is alive (in his grave). It (permissibility) has been recorded in our Kitaabs regarding going to the blessed grave of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) and making Durood and Salaam there and also to request for intercession. So, whoever that has the excellent fortune of presenting himself at the graveside of our Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) and making dua and seeking his intercession, I regard this not merely as being permissible, in fact, it is commendable and most virtuous. And Allaah Ta`ala Knows best.

(6). VISITING THE GRAVES

The Mas`alah of visiting the graves and having all sorts of rituals there is also a matter of contention. Regarding this, I would like to present a few points in order to make my opinion clear.

(1). In order to save this Ummat from the ignorant practices of grave-worship etc. our Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) initially forbade the visiting of graves. After these evil practices were eradicated from the people, Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) gave consent for the visiting of the graves, and said:

"I used to forbid you from visiting the graves. (Now that this prohibition has been lifted) Visit them now, because it lessens the desire for this world and reminds one of the hereafter." [Mishkaat, page 154]

This is the reason why it is permissible to visit the graveyard. However, there are differences regarding two Mas`alahs. Firstly, is this permission for men and women or only for men? Many Akaabireen have this opinion that women do not have the consent to visit the graveyard, because Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) said specifically regarding women:

"Allaah Ta`ala has cursed the female visitors to the graves." [Mishkaat, page 154]

Some aver that this prohibition was before the consent, and now just as for men, women also may go to the graveyard. The actual reason for the prohibition of females from the graveyard is that women are prone to weakness and impatience and they will go there and initiate all sorts of innovations and commotions. Since their

attendance at the graveyard will give rise to many Fitnahs, they have been prohibited from going. If women go to the graveyard and do not get involved in any Bid`ah, evil action or reaction and give way to their sentiments, then they may go, but his consent applies only to old ladies and not young women. [Fataawa Shaami, page 242]

(2). Our Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) taught us the following method of visiting the graveyard, that when one enters the graveyard he should recite the following dua:

"As-Salaam upon you O abode of a believing nation. You are our predecessors and we are your descendants. Indeed, if Allaah Ta`ala wills, we will be joining you. We beseech Allaah Ta`ala to grant us and you contentment." [Mishkaat, page 154]

Thereafter one should make some dua for the deceased and recite some Tilaawat etc. as *Isaal-e-Thawaab* for them. There have been a few Surahs that have been mentioned in the Ahaadith Shareef which have specific benefits. Similarly, the virtue and benefit of Durood Shareef has also been narrated. However, one may recite, Durood Shareef, Surah Faatihah, Aayatul Kursi, Surah Ikhlaas, etc. and pass the Thawaab onto the deceased. Dua can be made with the hands kept down, or one may lift hands, but (if the hands are lifted) one's back should be towards the grave and one should face the Qiblah. [Fataawa Aalimgiri, page 350, vol. 5]

(3). The object and main aim of visiting the graveyard is as Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) had mentioned, that is, so it (the sight of the graves) creates in one the reality of the briefness of the world. A man should take lesson from here. He remembers his own pending death and thinks of the grave. He prepares his soul for the Hereafter. The second object is to fulfil the rights of one's close (deceased) relatives, by making dua for them and passing on *Isaal-e-Thawaab* for them, thereby benefiting them. The visiting of the graves by the Ahlullaah (pious people) increases their stages and makes their traversing the path to Allaah Ta`ala more accessible.

(4). The Shariah has not allowed excesses to occur at the gravesides. Hence, we are prohibited from being disrespectful at the graveside and also from granting excessive respect, thereby transgressing the bounds of the Shariah. Hadhrat Jaabir (radhiAllaahu anhu) has reported that Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) has prohibited fortifying the graves (i.e. building a solid wall around it), from constructing tombs and domes upon it, and also from sitting upon them. [Mishkaat, page 148]

A prohibition from sitting on the graves and performing Salaat in their direction has been reported in one Hadith. It is reported in a Hadith that it will be better if one sits upon the burning coals of a fire and that the fire reaches and burns his body rather than sitting on a grave.

It is reported in one Hadith that Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) has forbidden the building of (walls around) graves, from writing upon them and from walking upon them. It has been reported in one Hadith that when Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) saw a Sahaabi, Hadhrat Amr Bin Hazam (radhiAllaahu anhu) 'fixing' up and neatening a grave, he said: ***"Do not case difficulty to the inmates of the grave."*** [Mishkaat Shareef, page 148/9]

It is very evident and apparent from these pure Ahaadith that Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) neither allowed disrespect to the graves nor did he allow excessive reverence. However, if anyone executes any act at the grave which is contrary to the Shariah then it is necessary to prevent and eradicate it. Hadhrat Ali (radhiAllaahu anhu) narrates that Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) deputed him with the important duty of destroying any (animate) picture or figure that he saw and flattening any grave that he saw which was (unusually) high. [Mishkaat, page 148]

From these Ahaadith it is clear that it is forbidden to make any grave solid or to make a tomb or dome on it. The very grave of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) and his two companions Hadhrat Abu Bakr (radhiAllaahu anhu)

and Hadhrat Umar (radhiAllaahu anhu) do not have solid walls around them. In fact, they are plain. [Mishkaat, page 149]

(5). Now, let us take a stock of what the ignorant people are doing at the gravesides nowadays. For example, the placing of a *chadar* (cloth) on the grave, to light lamps thereupon, to make Sajdah at the gravesides, to circumambulate (make Tawaaf) around the graves, to kiss the graves, to touch the eyes and forehead on the graves, to stand at the gravesides with hands folded in the same way as when performing Salaat, to bend at the gravesides as one would for Ruku, to make offerings at the graves, etc., etc. If you happen to go to the grave of any pious personality, you will witness for yourself all such sorts of scenes. Whereas, all such actions are clearly forbidden in all the Kitaabs of the Ahnaaf and the Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamaa`ah.

(7). SOLID GRAVES AND THEIR TOMBS

The Hadith wherein Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) had prohibited the building up of solid walls around graves has been mentioned previously. Our Aimmah of the Ahle Sunnat have ruled this act as being Haraam based on the above-mentioned narration. Imaam Muhammed (rahmatullahi alaih) – one of the senior students of Imaam Abu Hanifah (radhiAllaahu anhu) – states:

"We do not deem as correct (and permissible) to cover the grave with more sand than what was taken out therefrom. We regard as Makrooh (e-Tahrimi) the building up of (walls around) graves and plastering them (with mud or concrete). Indeed Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) had forbidden the building up of and solidifying graves. This is our Math-hab and this is Imaam Abu Hanifah's view also." [Kitaabul Aathaar, page 96]

Since our Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) had instructed Hadhrat Ali (radhiAllaahu anhu) to flatten all those graves which were high, Imaam Shaafi (rahmatullahi alaih) states that based upon this narration, he noted that in Makkah Mukarramah, the Aimmah had given the instructions that all built up graves be broken down. [Sharah Muslim Nawawi, page 312, vol.1]

From this we can safely gauge that those Auliyaah whose graves have been built up and solidified, they are completely free and not responsible for such accretions and innovations. They had never desired, liked or encouraged such actions. The responsibility of these innovations must be borne by the worldly leaders and rulers, who had acted in contradiction of the blessed words of our Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) and innovated these detestable actions. Nowadays people have begun to accept these tombs and built up graves as being a standard and a measure of piety and Wilaayat. You may also have experienced for yourselves where some tradesman used a dream or '*Ilhaam'* (Divine Inspiration) as a proof for building up some fake grave, wherafter the ignorant ones would go and worship at that grave. *Inna Lillaahi Wa Inna Ilaihi Ra`jeoon*. Nevertheless, almost every reputable Hanafi Kitaab, for example, Aalimgiri, Qaadhi Khaan, Durrul Mukhtaar, Kabeeri, etc. have stated this act as being totally impermissible. Allaamah Ibn Aabideen Shaami (rahmatullahi alaih) states:

"As far as building up of graves, I have never seen consent being granted for it anywhere." [Page 237, vol.2]

Hadhrat Thanaaullaah Paani Pati Hanafi (rahmatullahi alaih) states:

"And those graves (tombs) of the Auliyaah that are built up high, and lamps are lit there and all other such actions which take place there, are ALL HARAAM." [Mala Budda Minhu, page 84]

(8). PLACING OF CLOTH OVER THE GRAVE

It is also impermissible to place cloths over the graves. Never was a *chadar* (cloth) ever placed on a grave during the eras of our Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), the Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum), Taabieen or Aimmah-e-Huda (rahmatullahi alaihim ajmaeen). Allaamah Ibn Aabideen Shaami (rahmatullahi alaih) states:

"It is stated in 'Al-Ahkaam' citing from 'Hujjat': It is Makrooh (e-Tahrimi) to place a cloth on a grave." [Raddul Mukhtaar, page 228, vol.2]

(9). TO LIGHT LAMPS AT GRAVESIDES

Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) not only forbade the lighting of lamps and lanterns at the gravesides, in fact, he (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) cursed the perpetrators of such actions. Hadhrat Abdullaah Bin Abbaas (radhiAllaahu anhuma) states:

"Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) has cursed those women who go the graveyard, and those people who make the graves a place of worship and those who light lamps there." [Mishkaat, page 71]

Allaamah Hadhrat Ali (radhiAllaahu anhu) Qaari (rahmatullahi alaih) mentions in the commentary of this narration:

"The reason for the prohibition of lighting lamps at the gravesides is either because it is a waste of money, since it is not beneficial to anyone, and also because fire is a trait of Jahannum (which should be kept far from graves), or this prohibition is in order to prevent excessive respect being granted to gravesites, just as it is prohibited to make the graves a site for worship." [Footnote of Mishkaat]

Hadhrat Thanaaullaah Paani Pati Hanafi (rahmatullahi alaih) states:

"To raise the graves of the Auliyaa, to place a dome over it, to hold Urs, etc. there, to light lamps at the graves, etc. – ALL such actions are Bid`ah. Amongst them some are Haraam and others are Makrooh (e-Tahrimi). Our Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) has cursed those who light lamps and prostrate at the graves. He also mentioned that his grave not be made a place of festivities or a place of worship. The Masjid is the place for worship and the gathering of Eid takes place on a particular day of the year. Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) sent Hadhrat Ali (radhiAllaahu anhu) on a specific duty of flattening all those graves which were high and to destroy all pictures (of animate objects)." [Irshaadut Taalibeen, page 20]

(10). TO CIRCUMABULATE (MAKE TAWAAF) AND PROSTRATE AT THE GRAVES ETC.

Ignorant people make Sajdah (prostrate) at the gravesides. They also make Tawaaf around it and kiss it. According to the Shariah, all such actions are totally impermissible. Our Aimmah of the Ahle Sunnat have clearly classified such acts as Haraam and impermissible. Since making Tawaaf, Sajdah, tying the hands (as in Salaat) whilst standing, etc. are all actions that are specific with Ibaadat, and our Shariah has never consented to affording such respect at the gravesides, which leads to worshipping at the graves. Our Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) knew that the previous nations were led astray due to their excessiveness, hence he advised this Ummat of his to abstain and save themselves from such actions. Hadhrat Aishah (radhiAllaahu anha), mentions that Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) said during his last days:

"Allaah Ta`ala has cursed the Yahood (Jews) and Nasara (Christians) because they had made the graves of their prophets into places of worship." [Mishkaat, page 29]

It is stated in another Hadith: ***"Listen! The people before you used to make the graves of their prophets and Walis places of Sajdah. Know well! You must not make the graves places of worship, I am prohibiting you (therefrom)."*** [Ibid.]

"Oh Allaah! Do not make my grave an idol which is worshipped. The Anger of Allaah Ta`ala is severe upon that nation that makes the graves of their prophets places of worship." [Mishkaat, page 172]

A Sahaabi, Hadhrat Qais Bi Sa`ad (radhiAllaahu anhu) states that once he went to Hira. At this place he noticed that the people used to make Sajdah to their rulers. He thought to himself that Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) was more deserving of being granted such respect and dignity. When he returned, he came into the presence of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) and presented this thought of his, whereupon Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) said:

"If you had to pass by my grave, would you make Sajdah there?" The Sahaabi replied in the negative. Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) said: ***"Never ever do it. If I was to instruct anyone to make Sajdah to another human, then I would have instructed the womenfolk to make Sajdah to their husbands, owing to the rights their husband have over them."*** [Mishkaat, page 282]

Reflect upon these Ahaadith, and you will note with what severity our Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) has forbidden his Ummat from enacting such vile acts, as grave worship. Those who deem a grave an idol by making Sajdah near it, has been cursed by Allaah Ta`ala. Such an act also invites the severe Wrath and Anger of Allaah Ta`ala.

Based on these Ahaadith the Ulama of the Ahle Sunnat have branded Sajdah at the graves as an act of open *Shirk* (polytheism). Mullah Ali Qaari (rahmatullahi alaih) states in commentary of the Hadith ***"Allaah has cursed the Yahood and Nasara"***:

"The reason for the curse upon the Jews and Christians was either because owing to their excessive respect for the prophets they made Sajdah at the (prophets') graves, which is clear-cut Shirk, or because they used to perform Salaat for Allaah Ta`ala at the gravesites of their prophets. And during their Salaat they would face in the direction of the graves and make Sajdah upon them. They would be under the impression that they are executing two virtuous acts at the same time – i.e. Ibaadat for Allaah Ta`ala and excessive expression of respect for the prophets. This would constitute Shirk-e-Khafi (minor polytheism). The reason for this is that the creation is granted such high honour and respect which has not been permitted. Hence, our Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) has prohibited such actions because it resembles the actions of the non-believers and also because it is an act of Shirk-e-Khafi." [Footnote of Mishkaat, page 69]

Hadhrat Shah Waliullaah Muhaddith Dehlwi (rahmatullahi alaih) states in *"Alfowzul Kabeer"*:

"If you wish to see the entire scenario of the beliefs and actions of the Mushrikeen, then look at how the ignorant and foolish people of these times behave at the shrines and tombs, where they carry out all sorts of acts of Shirk. There is no calamity which is present in this present era which was not present in the previous nations, by some or the other people. May Allaah Ta`ala save us from such actions and beliefs."

Hadhrat Thanaaullaah Paani Pati Hanafi (rahmatullahi alaih) states:

"It is HARAAM to make Sajdah at the graves of the Auliyaa, to make Tawaaf around them, to make dua to them (i.e. ask of them) and to make a Nazr (vow) on their names. In fact, many of these actions lead one to Kufr. Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) has cursed such actions, and he has forbidden them and he said that his grave not be made a place of worship." [Mala Budda Minhu, page 88]

He states in *"Irshaadut Taalibeen"*, on page 81:

"It is not permissible to make Tawaaf around the graves, because Tawaaf of the Baitullaah is in the order of Salaat. Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) said that Tawaaf of the Baitullaah is Salaat."

It is stated in *"Fataawa Aalimgiri"* on page 351, vol.5:

"Burhaan Tarjumani states: 'We do not regard the placing of the hands upon the grave as Sunnah nor as an act of any virtue, but if anyone places his hand on a grave, then there is no harm.' Ainul Aimmah Karabeesi states: 'We have found it such to be without any prohibition from our predecessors.' Shamsul Aimmah Makki states: 'This is a Bid`ah.' Similar is stated in 'Qunyah'. The hands should not be placed upon the graves, and they should not be kissed, because indeed such actions are from amongst the habits of the Christians."

The crux of this ruling is that if one places his hand on a grave then there is no harm, as long as one does not regard it as a Sunnah or an act of virtue. But to pass the hands over the grave and to kiss the grave regarding them as acts worthy of blessing, then it will be an act of Bid`ah. This was not the method of the pious predecessors. In fact, it is a trait of the Christians.

(11). TO MAKE VOWS AND MAKE OFFERINGS AT THE GRAVES

Many people not only ask for their needs of the Auliyaa, they also take vows on their names, by saying that if a certain need of theirs is fulfilled, then they will place a new *chadar* on the grave of the Wali, or that they will give a certain amount of money. In this regard it is necessary to familiarise yourself with a few Masaa`il.

(1). To take a vow (*minnat or nazar)* is an Ibaadat, and to make Ibaadat of anyone else besides Allaah Ta`ala is not permissible. It is stated in our famous Hanafi Kitaab, *Durrul Mukhtaar*:

"Know! The vows which are taken on the names of the deceased by many people nowadays, and the money, oil, candles, lamps, etc. which are brought to their graves as a means of gaining nearness (to the inmate of the grave), are all BAATIL and HARAAM. Many people are involved in such vain acts, especially nowadays. Allaamah Qaasim has expounded on this Mas`alah in detail in the commentary of Durrul Mukhtaar."

Allaamah Shaami (rahmatullahi alaih) has stated the taking of such vows *(minnat and nazar)* to be Baatil and Haraam. The reasons being; firstly, that these vows are taken in the names of the creation, and it is not permissible to take vows in the name of any creation. *Nazar* is an Ibaadat and Ibaadat is not done for the creation. Secondly, the person in whose name the vow is taken is deceased and the dead do not have control or own anything. Thirdly, if the person taking the vow harbours this belief that besides Allaah Ta`ala this dead person also has control in the matters and affairs of the universe, then such a belief is *kufr*. [Raddul Mukhtaar, page 139]

Hadhrat Thanaaullaah Paani Pati Hanafi (rahmatullahi alaih) states:

"Ibaadat for any besides Allaah Ta`ala is impermissible. It is also not permissible to ask assistance from anyone besides Allaah Ta`ala. Hence, it is not permissible to make a nazar on the name of the Auliyaa, since nazar is an Ibaadat." [Irshaadut Taalibeen, page 18]

In summary, this ruling is recorded in many of our notable Kitaabs that *nazar* is an Ibaadat and Ibaadat is not permissible to anyone besides Allaah Ta`ala. Therefore, to take *minnats and nazars* at the shrines and tombs of the Auliyaa and to make offerings there are HARAAM and BAATIL.

(2). If any person has taken such a vow (on the name of a dead person), then it will not be permissible to fulfil it. If one fulfils it, then he will be regarded as a sinner. This is clearly stated in *Fataawa Aalimgiri*, *Bahrur Raa`iq*, and other reputable Fataawa Kitaabs, that if a vow is taken on sin, then it is not valid and its fulfilment is not necessary. [Fataawa Aalimgiri, page 208, vol.1] In fact, it would be necessary to make Tawbah for having made such a vow in the first place. Hadhrat Thanaaullaah Paani Pati Hanafi (rahmatullahi alaih) states:

"And if anyone has made such a vow, then he should not fulfil it, because, wherever possible it is Waajib to refrain and abstain from sin." [Irshaadut Taalibeen, page 18]

The object being that the making of such a vow is a sin and now to fulfil it would further exacerbate the sin. Hence, one should seek forgiveness for the initial sin and should not stupidly get involved in the second sin.

(3). If someone had taken such a vow and also fulfilled it, now since this offering (fulfilment of the vow) was earmarked for someone other than Allaah Ta`ala it becomes Haraam. Its usage or consumption also becomes impermissible. However, if a person had made an offering, and the offered item is still in its original condition (as it was placed), then if the person (who made the offering) repents from his sin of taking the vow, he may take back his offering. This is the ruling for that animal which was earmarked as an offering in another's name besides Allaah Ta`ala. That is, as long as that animal is still alive, the one who took the vow, repents from his sin and he may take back the animal. But, if the animal was slaughtered in the name of any other besides Allaah Ta`ala, even though at the time of slaughtering *Bismillaah* was recited, the consumption of this animal is not Halaal. Imaam Rabbaani Mujaddid Alfe Thaani writes in *Maktoobaat*, part 3:

"Those animals that are offered on the names of the buzrugs and they are slaughtered at the grave of the buzrug, according to the Fiqhi (jurisprudent) ruling such acts are included as being amongst shirk (polytheism). A great deal of discouragement from such acts has been recorded. Such offerings are in the same category as those which are made in the name of some jinnaat. According to the Shariah such acts are prohibited and counted as shirk."

4). If a person has taken a vow on Allaah Ta`ala's Name and his intention was for the *Isaal-e-Thawaab* of the pious person or for the benefit of the poor people in the vicinity, then such a vow will not be regarded as being Haraam of shirk. However, the masses do not differentiate between this type of vows and the type mentioned before, hence abstinence from such acts is also necessary.

Hadhrat Imaam Rabbaani Mujaddid Alfe Thaani (rahmatullahi alaih) states after what was cited above:

"Abstinence is also very necessary from such acts which bear resemblance to shirk. There are various ways of taking vows on the name of Allaah Ta`ala. What is the need for slaughtering an animal when taking a vow? Also for combining this slaughter with that which is made in the name of some jinnaat? There is a similarity between this is and the worship of jinnaats."

(5). If someone takes such a vow that if certain work or need of mine is fulfilled then, in the Name of Allaah Ta`ala I will distribute (X) amount of sweetmeats, or certain quantity of cloth, or grain on the poor people in the Khaanqah of Khwajah Bahaa`ul Haqq Zakariyyah Multaani, and the Thawaab thereof must be conferred to Khwajah Saheb, then such a vow is permissible. However, if his need is fulfilled, then it will not be necessary for him to distribute the said quantities of sweetmeats, cloth or grain to the people he had initially intended. It will suffice for him if he distributes the said quantities to any poor persons. The reward will be fully reaped by Hadhrat Khwajah Saheb. But, if this person is not pleased with distributing this fulfilment to any other poor persons, and he feels that it *must* be distributed to the poor in Hadhrat Khwajah's Khaanqah and nowhere else otherwise his vow will not be deemed as being fulfilled, then we establish herefrom that this person had not in reality made the vow for Allaah Ta`ala, and he actually desired making the offering to Hadhrat Khwajah. Because, if his desire was to make the vow to Allaah Ta`ala specifically, and that the *Isaal-e-Thawaab* be conferred to Hadhrat Khwajah Saheb,

and he did not intend thereby to gain proximity to Hadhrat Khwajah Saheb, then he would be contented in fulfilling the vow in the way prescribed by the Aimmah of the Deen. Hence, his claim of having made the vow exclusively for Allaah Ta`ala's Pleasure will be regarded as being incorrect and false.

Conclusion: Those vows and offerings which are made at the shrines of the Auliyaa, if they are made in order to gain proximity to the buzrug or it is made with this notion that they (buzrugs) will accept this vow and complete one's need, or if the vow is not taken on his (burug's) name then he will be displeased, which will result in harm befalling one's wealth, family and belongings, then all such acts, as mentioned before from the text of *Durrul Mukhtaar*, are Baatil and Haraam. This is the unanimous view of the Aimmah. There is no doubt in such acts being classified as *shirk.*

But, if a vow is taken only in the Name of Allaah Ta`ala and one intends the *Isaal-e-Thawaab* of the fulfilment for the buzrug, and also, one does not consider the pleasure or displeasure of the buzrug as having any connection to the vow, then it will be permissible. However, experience has shown that this is not the intention of those people who make vows and offerings at the shrines of the Auliyaa. Although they claim that they are making the vow in Allaah Ta`ala's Name and they intend the *Isaal-e-Thawaab* for the buzrug, they are in actual fact fooling themselves. Imaam Rabbaani Mujaddid Alfe Thaani (rahmatullahi alaih) states in *Maktoobaat 41*, part 3:

"Included in such vows (which are made in the names of other than Allaah Ta`ala) are those rozas which women keep, on the names of their peers. For the Iftaar of those rozas they stipulate all special types of treats. They even specify a particular day for the roza. They combine their object and desire with the roza. Through the waseelah of these rozas they ask of their needs from the peers. When their needs are fulfilled they regard it as having been granted by the peer. There is shirk in this Ibaadat. One should clearly understand the gravity of making waseelah in the Ibaadat of anyone other than Allaah Ta`ala.
When the evil and iniquity of this heinous sin becomes manifest, then the women aver that they kept the roza for Allaah Ta`ala but they intended the Thawaab for the peer. This is a glaring falsity. If they were true to their word, then why do they specify a particular day for the roza? And why do they stipulate all sorts of special and specific food for the Iftaar?"

(6). Regarding these type of vows, there is an important Mas`alah, which is a decisive matter on this issue, and of which not only the masses are ignorant, even many learned people are unwary of. The point is, that in reality a *nazar* or *mannat* has no play in a matter when one desires a need to be fulfilled or not. *Taqdeer* (fate) and Divine decision does not alter because of it (*nazar or minnat).* It is mentioned in *Saheehain:*

"Do not take vows (nazar), because nazars do not affect Qadar in the least bit. Indeed, it (vows) takes out the wealth of a miser." [Mishkaat, page 297]

Sheikh Abdul Haqq Muhaddith Dehlwi (rahmatullahi alaih) states in commentary of the above:

"Vows have been prohibited when made on this belief that one executes it on the notion that it will change fate (Taqdeer). It is the habit of people to make nazars in order for any need of theirs to be fulfilled and for any calamity to be removed. This is the trait of miserly people. It is for this reason that it has been discouraged. Generous people spend in charity, etc. of their own accord and without desiring any need to be fulfilled therewith (i.e. their spending in Allaah Ta`ala's path has no ulterior motive or 'strings attached'). The taking of vows has been discouraged due to this reason and one is encouraged to make vows with pure and sincere intentions."
[Footnote of Mishkaat]

It is mentioned in a Hadith that Sadaqah is a defence against calamities, but in the taking of vows, there is a form of business transaction, in that one will only take out Sadaqah if the need is fulfilled otherwise not. Nevertheless, even if those vows taken on the Name of Allaah Ta`ala do not change Taqdeer (fate), how can those taken on the names of buzrugs ever affect fate? But, alas this evil emanates from such vows, that if one's needs are not fulfilled,

then they draw their weapons against Taqdeer and say, *"Such ill fortune that it was not destined to be."* But if the need is fulfilled, then they do not speak well of fate, rather they attribute it to the buzrug, by saying *"See we took a vow on certain buzrug's name and* [Nauthubillaah] *he has fulfilled our need fully."* --- this is the basis upon which people's Aqeedah are spoilt, and whereby shaitaan steers people away from Allaah Ta`ala into his submission.

(12). EID MEELADUN NABI (SALLAHO ALAIHE WASSALAM)

12th Rabiul Awwal is the day when 'Meeladun Nabi' is celebrated. Nowadays it is regarded as being a sign of the people of the Ahle Sunnat. Regarding this, also, I wish to present a few points:

(1). The Thikr (remembrance) of our Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) is a meritorious Ibaadat; in fact it is the soul of our Imaan. Every single anecdote from the life of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) is beaming and overflowing with lesson and insight. Our Nabi's (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) birth, infancy, youth, revelation, propagation, Jihad, sacrifices, worries and concerns, Ibaadat and Salaat, character and noble traits, physical attributes and life-story, abstinence and piety, knowledge, humility, standing and sitting, walking and strolling, sleeping and wakefulness, peace treaties and wars, kindness and anger, mercy and benevolence, smiling and joy, etc., etc. – in short, every facet of his life is representative of his perfect example and a beam of guidance. His learning and teaching, his mentioning and conveying his message are binding upon this Ummat.

Similarly, it is an Ibaadat to speak well about those who had an affinity and companionship with him and those things which were connected with him, like his beloved ones and his companions, his wives and children, his workers and slaves, his clothes, weapons, horses, mules, and every minute thing connected with him. The reason being that in actual fact, the mentioning of any thing connected to him is actually speaking about him (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam).

(2). The pure and blessed life of our Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) is divided into two parts. The first being the period from his birth until just before his Nubuwwat. The second part being from revelation until his demise. There are numerous narrations and Ahaadith regarding parts of Nabi's (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) first portion of life. [These narrations are taken from different stages of his life, and are not in complete detail.] But, as far as the latter part of Nabi's (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) life, which the Qur`aan Majeed describes as the *Uswa-e-Hasana* (perfect example), there exists a complete recording which is preserved in the Ahaadith. When one studies these narrations, then it appears such that we can almost see and hear Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) with us (i.e. the record of his life is so thorough). Without exaggeration, this is one great and outstanding feature of this Ummat and a source of great fortune, that this Ummat has a complete record of the life of their beloved Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). They can take every narration and be able to ascertain how correct it is. There is not a single nation on earth today, that can claim they have such a complete and authentic record of the life of their saviour. This point requires a detailed discussion, but here we will suffice just upon this brief indication.

(3). There are two ways of explaining the life of our Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). The first is that one takes every single aspect of Nabi's (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) life and implement it, internally and externally, in such a way that the features, character, mannerisms, etc, of every Ummati of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) is seen in them. The onlooker can immediately discern that these are the servants of Muhammed (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam).

The second way is that wherever one gets the opportunity, one speaks well and glowingly of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). One extols on the virtues, habits, features, character, manner, etc. of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam).

The Salf-e-Saaliheen, Sahaabah-e-Kiraam, Taabieen and Aimmah-e-Huda, used to implement both these aspects of Nabi's (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) life. They would implement each and every Sunnat from the life of Nabi

(sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) into theirs and at every juncture they would extol his virtues and praises. You must most probably have heard this incident in the life of Hadhrat Umar (radhiAllaahu anhu) that when he was on his deathbed, a young person came into his presence whose trousers were below his ankles. Hadhrat Umar (radhiAllaahu anhu) told him to raise his trousers to above his ankles – since this was contrary to the Sunnah of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). Hadhrat Abdullaah Bin Umar (radhiAllaahu anhu) had such fervour for following the Sunnah of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) that when he embarked on the journey for Hajj, he would stop at every place where Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) had stopped when he (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) went for Hajj. Whichever tree Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) rested under he would do, likewise. Wherever Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) stopped to relieve himself, he (Hadhrat Abdullaah Bin Umar - radhiAllaahu anhu) would also stop, even though he did not have the urge to relieve himself. He would even imitate the mode of Nabi's (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) sitting. These were the true and genuine lovers of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), who not only restricted the example of Nabi's (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) life to Kitaabs; they were practical examples of his life. They illuminated and scented the world with the beautiful way of life of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). The Sahaabah-e-Kiraam (radhiAllaahu anhum) and the Taabieen (rahmatullahi alaihim) reached many places where they did not know the native tongue neither were they familiar with the vocabulary of the people. But merely by looking at their example, their character, habits, dealings, etc. many a tribe accepted this way of life and in this way the Noor of Imaan spread, and they became servants of the beautiful way of Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). This is the lustre of the life of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) which every believer needs to spread by way of example.

(4). None of the Salf-e-Saaliheen ever attended a gathering of the Seerat of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). Nor did any of them ever grace the gathering of Meelad. The reason being that for them each day was a day of *Eid* and every night *Shab-e-Baraat*. It is clear and obvious that when their entire lives were drenched in the Seerat of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), when their every gathering and function was filled with the lustre of Nabi's (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) name, when their every word and action was a portrayal of Seerat-e-Nabawi, then what was the reason or need for them to hold gatherings specifically named such. But, as the eras started moving further and further away from that of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), the actions of people were turned into mere speech and empty slogans, their actions were replaced by words. Alhamdulillah, this Ummat will never be barren. With the Fadhl of Allaah Ta`ala there are still people today who keep the life of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) in front of them as a mirror and lead their lives accordingly. And for such people every Sunnat of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) is more valuable than the dominion of Hadhrat Suleiman (alaihi salaam), and the treasures of Qaaroon. However, I need to shamefully concede that such people are very few. Most people are like me, a useless and hopeless creature, who, once or twice in a year call out slogans of Seerat-e-Nabawi and we understand that we have fulfilled the obligation that is binding upon us and we feel that we deserve the intercession of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). However, throughout the year there is not even a glimmer of the blessed life of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) in ours. Such people have effaced the Sunnats of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). Not daily, but every minute of every day, they are desecrating and destroying the Sunnats of our beloved Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) without even having a shred of shame or guilt that they are causing untold harm. They are under this false notion that by listening to one two *Qawalis* and poetry praising Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), their duty is done.

(5). The Ummat remained free of gatherings of Meelad for six centuries. And as has been mentioned previously, the Muslims never held any specific gathering in the name of *Meeladun or Seerat-e-Nabi*. The initiators of the gatherings of Meelad was Sultan Abu Saeed Muzaffar and Abul Khitaab Ibn Wahya in the year 602 A.H. Three things were kept in special consideration (at these gatherings):

1. The specification of the 12th Rabiul Awwal
2. The gathering of Ulama and pious people
3. At the end of the gathering, *Isaal-e-Thawaab* was made to Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) by means of distributing food.

There is a difference of opinion regarding what type of people these two (initiators of Meelad) were. Some historians have classified them as Faasiq (Shar`i transgressors) and liars. Whilst others have said them to be just and reliable. *Allaah Knows best*.

When this innovation began, then there were discussions between the Ulama with regard to its permissibility or impermissibility. Allaamah Faakihani (rahmatullahi alaih) and his companions excused them selves from attending these gathering due to the conditions and specifications that were attached to them and they also branded these gatherings a *Bid`ah-e-Sayyi`a*. Other Ulama sided with the Sultan and they did not regard the conditions placed on the gathering as being objectionable and they gave the ruling of permissibility and participated therein. When this custom started it did not remain restricted to only Ulama and pious persons, in fact, laypeople also started attending and all other sorts of 'extras' were introduced. We now have to take stock of the present day Meelad celebrations that take place (Allaah Ta`ala knows best how many new and different introductions have been added).

(6). One of the main points to consider is the fact that an act which was non-existent during the era of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), his Sahaabah and Taabieen, in fact Islaam remained free of it for six centuries, and now it has gained the status of being a 'characteristic' and 'feature' of Islaam. Those who keep this 'Characteristic of Islaam' alive are regarded as *Aashiqaan-e-Rasool* (lovers of the Rasool). Whilst those who remain aloof from this innovation and newly invented 'characteristic' of Islaam are regarded as enemies of Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). *Inna Lillaahi Wa Inna Ilaihi Raji`oon.*

If only these people would consider and reflect regarding those who in the initial six centuries of Islaam who were 'deprived' of their newly invented 'characteristic' of Islaam --- what would they consider them to be? Are they all – *Nauthubillaah* – enemies of Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam)?
Will they also not consider that the announcement for the completion of Deen was made on the occasion of Hajjatul Widaa on the Day of Arafat. Which prophet came thereafter to introduce this new 'characteristic' of Islaam which the Ummat in the first six centuries of Islaam were unaware of? Is Islaam to be treated like it is mine or anybody else's house, that they can remove what they wish therefrom and add to it what they desire?

(7). Actually it was a distinguishing trait of the nations prior to Islaam that they used to celebrate death anniversaries. Just like how the Christians celebrate the day of the birth of Hadhrat Isaa (alaihi salaam). On the other hand, it was Islaam that eradicated all such customs. There are two basic underlying reasons and wisdoms behind this prohibition. Firstly, whatever occurs at these birthday celebrations, have no truck with the true sprit of Islaam. Islaam does not subscribe to decorations, pomp, show and slogan singing. True Islaamic teachings and invitation begins from the heart and not outward noises and entertainment. The aim and object of Islaamic teachings is focussed on character, true beliefs and virtuous actions. All this outward pomp and splendour has absolutely no value in Islaam.

The second wisdom is that Islaam does not make a hue and cry over any specific season. In fact, it is like a pure upright tree, whose shade and fruit are continuous and everlasting. It is as though the words of the Qur`aan Majeed ***"Its fruits are ever-lasting and its shade (also)"*** indicate that the invitation and message of Islaam is not specific to any particular day or occasion, in fact, it encompasses the horizons and all times.

Also, other nations celebrate one or two special occasions, like birthday anniversaries (of their pious) and they suffice upon this. Contrary to this, Islaam has in its lap, hundreds of thousands, nay, millions such venerable personalities whose stages and ranks deserve noting – Islaam accepts all the prophets, i.e. approximately 25 000 Ambiyaa, who were the heroes of mankind, and the presence of each one of them far surpassed the value of the entire universe, and the after the Ambiyaa, we have the Sahaabah-e-Kiraam (radhiAllaahu anhum). Was there total less than 25 000 of them?!

And then after them, we have all the thousands of Auliyaa of every era, who were lamps of guidance for the masses. Now, if Islaam has to open the doors of birthday celebrations for each one of all these personalities, will the Muslims have anything else to do in their lives besides celebrating?

Since all such vain acts are the anti-theses of the spirit and teachings of Islaam, hence, it was not acceptable or practiced in the initial six centuries of Islaam, after Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), the Sahaabah and Tabieen.

If you have studied the history of Islaam, you will note that the sixth century was around the time when the Christians raised the banner of trinity and there were many battles between them and the Muslims. The Christians sullied and putrefied the earth with their filth. On the one hand the spirit of Islaam was being weakened due to the many Fitnahs and innovations that had entered the people, and on the other hand the Christians were gaining victory over the Muslims. Due to this weakness of the Muslims, they were easily influenced by the cultures and customs of their victors. Hence, the Muslims also started celebrating the birthday of our Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), in imitation of the kuffaar ways. However, collective spirit of the Ummat did not accept this innovation. In fact, from around the beginning of the sixth century, until today, the Ulama of the Ummat have branded it a Bid`ah. They included it in the category of being a means of deviation.

(8). Even though the custom of Meelad began in the sixth century, and people have added many 'extras' to it, no one ever had the courage to call it *"Eid"*. Because our Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) clearly stated ***"Do not make my grave an 'Eid'"***. I have quoted above the text from Hadhrat Qaadhi Thanaaullaah Paani Pati (rahmatullahi alaih) stating the reasons as to why there exists a prohibition in making it an *"Eid"*. However, recently, this occasion has been granted the status and honour of being called *"Eid Meeladun Nabi"*.

Which Muslim is there in the world over who is unaware that Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) has specified two Eids for this Ummat? – Eidul Fitr and Eidul Adha. If the birthday of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) was also to have been called an "Eid" and if it had any connection to the teachings of Islaam, then Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) would have stated so himself. If Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) deemed this to be a noteworthy action, the he would have introduced in himself, but this was not the case. This leaves us with two conclusions, either we are grossly mistaken by calling it an "Eid", or – *Nauthubillaah* – we are more happier at the birth of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) than the Sahaabah-e-Kiraam (radhiAllaahu anhum) were and they also did not have as much affection and love for Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) than we have!!

Another moot point here is that there is a difference of opinion as to the exact date of Nabi's (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) birth. Some say that it was the 9th Rabiul Awwal, others say 8th Rabiul Awwal and the majority say 12th. But, there is no difference in opinion with regards the demise of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), which was the 12th Rabiul Awwal. It appears that we have chosen the day of the demise of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) to celebrate the 'festival of Eid'. If someone has to ask us whether we are celebrating the day of the birth of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) or are we rejoicing at his demise (*Nauthubillaah)*? It will be difficult for us to give a reply.

Nevertheless, I do not regard the calling of this occasion an "Eid" as a light matter, in fact, I regard it as being a serious and clear alteration in the Deen. In Shar`i terminology, to use one's own opinion in unsuitable and unjustified places is regarded as changing and altering the Deen.

(9). Another point is that this "Eid" which is celebrated in the name of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) is also a matter of shame and disgrace. Beardless boys sing erroneous poems, fabricated and false stories which have no substantiation in the Hadith or history are narrated, noise, rejoicing and merrymaking take place, Salaat is neglected and a whole lot of other things occur whereof we are unaware. If only they had taken cognisance and respected the honour of the Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) at this Bid`ah which takes place in his name (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam).

A very disturbing belief which stirs anger is that these people believe that Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) presents himself in person at these gatherings. Oh what a misfortune and calamity to Islaam!

(10). Now I would like to make a notable final point regarding *"Eid Meeladun Nabi"*. Of recent, here in Karachi at these Meelad celebrations models of the *Roza-e-At`har* (blessed grave of Nabi - sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) and the Kaabah are made. These are placed at large squares, and people come there and gain 'barkat' from them. They also make Tawaaf of the Kaabah models. And all this carries on at the hands of Muslims and under the supervision of the Ulama! How sad!

Leaving aside all the other things of the festival of Meelad and consider just this one point. How many evils are combined in just this one act.

Firstly, the thousands of rupees that are spent here is nothing other than waste and squander. You have passed the quotation of Mullah Hadhrat Ali Qaari (rahmatullahi alaih) wherein the Hadith of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) is mentioned regarding the prohibition of placing lamps etc at the gravesides due to it being a vain act of waste. The wealth granted by Allaah Ta`ala is being wasted freely. Consider – if Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) regarded the placing of one lamp at the graveside as being a vain act of waste, and he cursed such a perpetrator, what would he say regarding the thousands which are spent in these festivities? Also consider the irony that this wastage is perpetrated by those people who languish in abject poverty, where they are even at times prepared to sell their Imaan in exchange for food, clothes and shelter. If only these people can give this same money in cash to the poor in the name of *Isaal-e-Thawaab* for Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), how much of great merit would it not warrant and how meritorious and rewarding it would be. Would not this be a better and more rewarding act?

Also, all this festivities and waste carries on in whose name? That personality who tied stones on his belly due to excessive hunger. If we carry out all such vain acts, then what example will we be to those who are non-believers? The Qur`aan Majeed describes the wasters as being the ***"brothers of shaitaan"*** and we regard it as being an meritorious and rewarding act.

Secondly, these actions are following in the examples of the Shiahs and Rawaafidh. You must be aware that every year the Shiahs 'celebrate' the death anniversary of Hadhrat Hussein (radhiAllaahu anhu). On this occasion they enact all sorts of evil acts. Whatever evil they have innovated in the name of Hadhrat Hussein (radhiAllaahu anhu) and the family of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), we have now introduced in the name of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), himself. Consider carefully, if the placing of models of the *Rhoda-e-At`har* and Kaabatullah at every street corner and people carrying out such actions at these models as they would at the actual Kaabah and blessed grave of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), then what criticisms can we level at the *ta`ziyah, daldal*, etc. of the Shiahs?

It is a sad thing that all the evil innovations the Rawaafidh have perpetrated, we are now following them and have placed the seal of authenticity to it.

Thirdly, the models of the *Rhoda-e-At`har* and Kaabah that are made up are similar to the *ta`ziyah* of the Shiahs in that they are temporary and counterfeit. Today they are constructed and tomorrow broken up. The question here is that does any blessing or effect from the actual grave of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) or the Kaabah get transferred to these models or not? If no effect does pass on to these models, then there is absolutely no doubt that these are vain and useless acts. If any effect and blessing is actually passed on to these models, then what is the Shar`i justification to prove this? Also, to believe that there are blessings of the actual Kaabah and grave of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) on the models, then is this a sign of Islaam or ignorance? And is not the act of making these fake models the one day and broken the next an act of dishonour and debasement? It is a well-known

fact that a statuette of a king is never the real king. It bears absolutely no qualities of the real king. Also, if one breaks and defaces the statuette of a king it would imply and denote disrespect and contempt for the king. It also denotes rebelliousness to the king. But, nowadays, those who deface and break up the models of the *Rhoda-e-At`har* and Kaabatullaah, have no shame and regret at their act of showing disregard at a symbol of Islaam.
Fourthly, just as the Shiahs make offerings and take vows at the *ta`ziyah* of Hadhrat Hussein (radhiAllaahu anhu), this same evil and despicable Bid`ah is slowly seeping into our people. Durood and salaam are recited at this model of Nabi's (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) grave. Actual Tawaaf is made around the models of the Kaabatullaah. It is as though these people have no need to go to the real Kaabah for Hajj and Umrah, or to visit the actual grave of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). My pen does not have the strength and capability to sufficiently condemn, censure and rebuke these evil and accursed acts. These acts are extremely serious and vile according to the Aimmah of the Ahle Sunnah Wal Jamaat. To gauge the seriousness according to our Ulama, we will suffice on just one example. There was a stage when people innovated the act of gathering outside their town on open plains on the day of Arafat just as the Haajis do on the occasion of Hajj. Imitating the act of the Haajis, they would also spend the entire day in dua and Ibaadat. This custom was called *"Ta`reef"* (i.e. celebrating the occasion of Arafat). On the face of it, there appeared no harm in this act. In fact, it could be deemed an good act in that at least once a year people would get the opportunity to make proper dua and Astaghfaar. But, our Ulama of Ahle Sunnat (may Allaah Ta`ala reward them) branded this act a Bid`ah and condemned it in the strongest terms. They stated:

"Ta`reef is nothing (i.e. it is worthless and has no value in the Shariah)."

Sheikh Ibn Nujaim, author of *Bahrur Raa`iq* states;

"Since the stationing on the plains of Arafat is such an Ibaadat which is specifically for that place, hence this act, in any other place is not permissible. Just like Tawaaf, etc. is not permissible, as you realise that to make Tawaaf as one would of the Kaabah at any other place is not permissible." [Page 176, vol.2]

Hadhrat Shah Waliullaah Muhaddith Dehlwi (rahmatullahi alaihi) states:

"The fact that Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) said: ***'Do not make my grave an 'Eid''*** *indicates to this fact that the doors to changing the Deen have been closed, because the Jews and Christians used to do this at the graves of their prophets."* [Hujjatullaahil Baalighah]

Mullah Hadhrat Ali (radhiAllaahu anhu) Qaari (rahmatullahi alaih) mentions in commenting on the rituals of Hajj that Tawaaf is a speciality of the Kaabah. Therefore it is Haraam to make Tawaaf of the graves of the Ambiyaa and Auliyaa. There is no consideration in the actions of the ignorant people, even if they assume the form of Mashaaikh and Ulama. [*Al-Jannatu Li Ahlis Sunnati*, page 7]

It is stated in *Bahrur Raa`iq, Kifaayah Sharh Hidaaya and Mi`raajud Diraaya*:

"That person who makes Tawaaf of any other Masjid besides the Kaabah, there is a fear of kufr for him." [Ibid.]

From the above explanations, one can ascertain the status and validity of the act of regarding the models of the Kaabah and *Rhoda* as being the real thing and carrying out the same actions as one would at these places.
In conclusion, we note that the festival of Meelad with all its attached evils and those which are added on every year, is diametrically opposed to the teachings and the true spirit of Islaam. I am pained at the reaction our beloved Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) goes through when all these disgraceful acts are presented to him. And since the Sahaabah-e-Kiraam (radhiAllaahu anhum) were the connection between us and Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), what must their condition be if they see such things?

Nevertheless, I do not regard these acts as merely Bid`ah, I consider it as being alteration in Deen. I will conclude this discussion on a statement of Imaam Rabbaani Mujaddid Alfe Thaani (rahmatullahi), who said regarding this mas`alah about his Sheikh Khwajah Baaqiullaah (rahmatullahi alaih):

"Look at this impartially. Let us assume that our Hadhrat has to come into this world at this time, and he has to attend these gatherings. Will he be pleased with them or not? This humble servant is quite certain that he will never approve thereof. It is the aim of this humble writer to express and convey the truth. Whether you accept it or reject, is of no consequence (to me). There is also no scope for argument on this matter." [Maktoob 273, part one]

SUNNAT AND AHLE SUNNAT

In the discussion of the differences between the Deobandis and Barelwis, you have come across the important Masaa`il from the Qur`aan Majeed, Sunnat and Aimmah Ahle Sunnat. Since in the preceding pages the words Sunnat and Bid`ah have come quite often, hence, I will now discuss these two terms so that you have no confusion with regard to who the Ahle Sunnat are.

(1). Sunnat and Bid`ah are two complete opposites. When it is said that a certain thing is Sunnat, then it means that it is not a Bid`ah and if it is said that a certain thing is Bid`ah, then in other words it implies that that particular thing is contrary to the Sunnat.

(2). You, the entire Muslim Ummat and I have full Imaan in that with the coming of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), on the one hand, the Shariahs of all the previous prophets were abrogated, and on the other hand, the doors of prophethood was closed until Qiyaamah. With the coming of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), his very being was an example of those things whereby we could ascertain which things are liked and which unliked by Allaah Ta`ala. Besides this there is no other way. Those things which Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) showed us which were liked or not by Allaah Ta`ala, this is what is called Deen and Shariah. The announcement of the termination of his teachings was made three months before his (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) demise, on the plains of Arafat. Now, there is absolutely no scope for any deletions or additions to this Deen.

(3). Sunnat is also known as *Tariqah* (the way). Hence, "Sunnat" are those things which Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) taught, like, Aqaa`id, character, dealings, habits, etc. Together with holding onto the knowledge of *Tariqah-e-Nabawi*, the Qur`aan Majeed and the Ahaadith of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) have exhorted and coupled the Sunnat of the Khulafaa-e-Raashideen. That is, both of them are binding upon us. Hence, the Sunnat of the Khulafaa-e-Raashideen (radhiAllaahu anhum) holds the same ruling as the Sunnat of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). Also, Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) has stressed greatly upon the virtues of the Sahaabah-e-Kiraam (radhiAllaahu anhum). He has certified their reliability and integrity. It is stated in one Hadith:

"Honour my companions, because indeed they are the best amongst you. And after them (in importance) are those (Taabieen) who follow them, and after them are those (Tab-e-Taabieen) who follow them. Thereafter falsehood will prevail." [Mishkaat, page 554]

It is also reported in another Hadith that those Sahaabah who pass away in any land, on the day of Qiyaamah, they will rise up and be the leaders and Noor for the people. [Mishkaat].

There are numerous Ahaadith regarding this topic. On the one hand, the Qur`aan Majeed has classified this venerable group of Sahaabah as *"Believers"* and *"The best of the Ummat"*, and we have been ordered to follow their way. That person who transgresses their way is regarded as having deviated and is warned of Jahannum. On the other hand there are numerous Ahaadith which extol the blessings and virtues of the Sahaabah-e-Kiraam (radhiAllaahu anhum). It is for this reason that the Sunnat of the Sahaabah-e-Kiraam is the reflection of the Sunnat

of our Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). Whatever action they did with consensus and whatever they omitted with consensus is regarded as being absolute (proof). It is not permissible for anyone to discard their way. Also, whatever some Sahaabah did and it was not rejected by the other Sahaabah, is also regarded as being correct and the truth. There is no scope in any doubt in this.

The crux of the matter is that whatever actions the Sahaabah carried out is a proof of it being Sunnat. And since Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) has mentioned these three eras, that is, the Sahaabah, Tabieen and Tab-e-Taabieen, without any hesitation, we can classify their actions as being part of the Sunnat.

(5). With the definition of Sunnat, the meaning of Bid`ah becomes apparent. That is, to understand to be part of the Deen whatever was not prevalent during the eras of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), the Sahaabah, Taabieen and Tab-e-Taabieen, is regarded as a Bid`ah. However, in order to understand it properly, it is imperative that we clarify a few points:

Firstly, those Masaa`il wherein more than one option is narrated, all of them will be regarded as Sunnat. It will not be permissible to chose one of them and classify the others as Bid`ah. Except of course if one of them were abrogated. For example, the saying of *"Ameen"* loudly after (Surah Faatihah) is reported from Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) and so is the saying of it softly. Hence both these actions are termed as being Sunnat. It is impermissible to term one of these actions as being Bid`ah.

Secondly, if Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) executed a certain action often and another rarely, then the one which he did often will be classified as being Sunnat, but the second action, which he (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) did rarely was done to indicate consent for it, hence it cannot be classified as Bid`ah. This second action will be classified as being permissible, although the actual Sunnat will be the one which he did often.

Thirdly, regarding those things which came into existence after these three eras, they are classified into two categories: one is those which are regarded as an object in themselves and the other which is not regarded as such, rather it is regarded as being a means of attaining some other Deeni objective. For example, many virtues and benefits have been extolled regarding the learning and teaching of the Deeni knowledge of Qur`aan Majeed and Ahaadith. They have been greatly stressed upon. Hence, the attainment of those means of acquiring this knowledge which came into existence after theses three noble eras, would not be regarded as Bid`ah (on the condition that the means adopted are permissible in themselves). The reason for this permissibility is that these means are not the actual objective, in fact, they are a means of attaining a Deeni objective.

Similarly, the virtues and benefits of Jihad have been greatly extolled in the Qur`aan Majeed and Ahaadith. Hence, it would not be regarded as Bid`ah to utilise those means and weapons for Jihad which were not used the noble eras, because the usage of these means and weapons is not the actual objective and they are also not regarded as being the object of Deen.

Similarly, the journey for Hajj is also very meritorious. But, it would not be regarded as Bid`ah to go for Hajj using the aeroplane or ship, since this mode of travel is not regarded as being the Deeni objective, it is merely a means of attaining and reaching one's objective, i.e. Hajj, which is the actual Ibaadat.

In short, the usage of those things which are a means of attaining a Shar`i objective, are permissible. But, to regard such things as being the actual objective and a necessity of Deen, would be a Bid`ah.

Fourthly, The principles of many Shar`i Masaa`il have been outlined in the Qur`aan Majeed and Ahaadith. The experts in this field of studying these principles, use these principles to extract many other Masaa`il. Hence, those Masaa`il which are extracted using the Qur`aan Majeed and Ahaadith as a basis would also not be classified as Bid`ah, since this has been established from the Qur`aan Majeed and Sunnat. It is for this reason that the Ijtihaad of

the Aimmah are also regarded as being a part of the Deen, after that of the Qur`aan Majeed, Sunnat or Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), Sahaabah and Tabieen. Ijtihaad is also regarded as being one of the proofs of the Deen.

Fifthly, those things which are neither proven from the Qur`aan Majeed, nor the Hadith of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), nor the actions of the Sahaabah or Tabieen, nor the Ijtihaad of the Fuqahaa of the Ummat nor Qiyaas, are NOT regarded as being part of the Deen. They cannot be made part of the Deen by the *Kashf or Ilhaam* of any buzrug, nor by the whimsical Qiyaas of any learned person. The proofs for the Shariah are those four mentioned previously. Besides these to 'prove' anything as being part of the Deen is in itself a Bid`ah.

(6). Bid`ah is divided into two types: one regarding beliefs (*I`tiqaadi)* and another regarding actions (*Amali)*. *I`tiqaadi* Bid`ah refers to those beliefs and views held by any person or group which differs to the beliefs of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) and the Sahaabah-e-Kiraam. This falls under the Qur`aanic Aayat: ***"Darkness – some of it over others"***. Further on it is divided into many other categories. Some of them are clear-cut kufr. Like, for example, the belief of the Qadianis that after Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) the doors of Nubuwwat are still open (*Nauthubillah)*, or that Hadhrat Isaa (alaihi salaam) died, etc. Some *I`tiqaadi* Bid`ahs are not classified as Kufr but they certainly lead to deviation.

Amali Bid`ah would not entail a corruption of beliefs, rather it refers to the execution of those actions which were not carried out by the Salf-e-Saaliheen.

(7). Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) has chastised and castigated Bid`ah to such an extent that in terms of its evil it follows after kufr and *shirk*. In this regard I have quoted one or two Ahaadith at the beginning of this discussion, and if I have to cite any more, then this discussion would be greatly increased. The crux of the matter is that Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) had termed Bid`ah as being rejected, accursed and deviation. From this one can gauge how degraded a person would be in the sight of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) if he has to innovate a Bid`ah. It is mentioned in a Hadith that the Fardh and Nafl Ibaadat of such a person is not accepted by Allaah Ta`ala. It is mentioned in another Hadith that the person who grants honour to a Bid`ati has aided in the destruction of the Deen. It is reported in another Hadith that the person who moves away from the "Al-Jamaat", even a hand-span, has unyoked Islaam from his neck. [Mishkaat, page 31]

From this one can ascertain how hateful even the smallest and most insignificant Bid`ah was to Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam).

This matter remains as to why Bid`ah is such a detestable deed. The seniors of the Deen have made many lengthy discussions on this subject. I will briefly state a few reasons, hereunder:

Firstly, the completion and perfection of the Deen of Islaam was made by Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) had also outlined and expounded on all those actions and ways in which one can gain nearness, proximity and the Pleasure of Allaah Ta`ala. Now if any person innovates any action and calls people towards it, it will be as if he is implying that the Deen of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) is, *Nauthubillaah*, incomplete and deficient. And that this means of gaining proximity to and acquiring the Pleasure of Allaah Ta`ala which was innovated by this idiot was, *Nauthubillaah*, unknown to Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). Or it also implies that the intricacies of the Deen was better understood by this Bid`ati than it was by Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), his Sahaabah and Tabieen, *Nauthubillaah*.

In short, if a person makes that action a part of Deen and regards it as an Ibaadat, which neither Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) nor the Sahaabah nor Tabieen carried out, is not merely making an assault on the way of the Salf-e-Saaliheen, he is in fact, making an attack on the Deen which was brought by Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). Hence, what doubt can there be in this person being accursed and rejected?

Secondly, besides Bid`ah, when a person carries out any other sinful action, he does discern that he is doing an incorrect action. He may feel ashamed of his sin and repent. Contrary to this, Bid`ah is such an evil and despicable act that instead of understanding it as being incorrect, the perpetrator deems it as being meritorious action. Shaitaan presents this act to the perpetrator in such an acceptable form that he will never realise its incorrectness. He will be deprived of repenting therefrom until his death. It is for this reason that great, great sinners eventually gain the guidance of repenting, whereas there is no cure from the disease of Bid`ah, except, if Allaah Ta`ala showers His Special Mercy on that person and he realises the error of his ways.

Thirdly, the evilness of Bid`ah deprives a person of the Noor of Sunnat. Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) said:

"When any nation innovates a Bid`ah, then its equivalent Sunnat is lifted (removed) from them. Therefore, to adhere to even the smallest of Sunnats is by far better than innovating a Bid`ah." [Ahmad, Mishkaat, page 31]

It is reported in another Hadith:

"No nation innovates a Bid`ah except that Allaah Ta`ala removes from them a Sunnat equal to it, and it (the Sunnat) will never return to them until the Day of Qiyaamah." [Mishkaat, page 31]

The reason for the removal and eradication of the Sunnat is that once a person practices upon a Bid`ah then the Noor and abilities of the heart are eliminated. A person is unable to differentiate between Haqq and Baatil. The example is like that of an inexperienced stupid person. He desires that his real money be increased. So, he is given a bag full of counterfeit money in exchange for his few genuine coins. This idiot is now happy with himself in that he feels that he has achieved an excellent bargain. However, his happiness will be short-lived. Once he reaches the market-place, not only will he realise the actual worth of his 'money', he will also be accused of dealing in counterfeit money.

Understand well, on the day of Qiyaamah, only the currency of the Sunnat of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) will be acceptable. Those who will take with them the counterfeit currency of the Aakhirah in the form of Bid`ah will realise its worthlessness. They will also be accused of bargaining away the genuine currency of the Sunnat of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) for the worthless Bid`ah counterfeit. It is stated in a Hadith:

"I will reach the Hawdh-e-Kauther before any of you. Whoever comes to me will drink of its water, and whoever drinks of its water once will never again feel thirsty. Some people will come towards me who I will recognise and they will recognise me, but there will be a barrier between us. I will say that these are my people, whereupon this reply will be given to me: 'You do not know what these people did after your demise (i.e. what they had innovated into the Deen)'. Upon hearing this reply, I will say: 'Away with him, away with him who has changed the Deen after me.'" [Agreed upon, Mishkaat, page 488]

From this narration it is quite evident that those who innovate in the Deen will be deprived of the water of Kauther on the day of Qiyaamah, by Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). What bigger deprivation than this can there be? It is for this reason that the pious predecessors have voiced such great dislike and hatred for Bid`ah. Imaam Ghazaali (rahmatullahi alaih), after explaining and encouraging the need for following the habitual traits of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) states:

"Whatever we have mentioned was in order to encourage the following of the habitual of traits (of Nabi - sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). But, regarding those actions (of Nabi - sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) which are connected with Ibaadat, the exclusion of any of these, without valid excuse, is nothing other than Kufr-e-Khafi (light kufr) and Himaaqat-e-Jali (clear and open stupidity)." [Tableegh-e-Deen Tarjuma Arbaeen, page 42]

Imaam Rabbaani Mujaddid Alfe Thaani rahmatullahi alaih) states:

"This humble servant is imploring Allaah Ta`ala with utmost humility, pleading, beseeching and begging, secretly and openly, that He does not get my companions and I entrapped in any new innovation in the Deen which was not practiced by Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) and the Khulafaa-e-Raashideen (radhiAllaahu anhum), even though that newly innovated thing may appear to be as glittering as the sun. He should not allow us to be fascinated or impressed with its (outward) 'beauty'. (May He accept this supplication through the) mediation of the Best of all mankind sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam)." [Maktoob 186, part 1]

Fourthly, The abovementioned Hadith of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam): "***Away with him, away with him who has changed the Deen after me."*** Expounds one other aspect of the accursedness of Bid`ah, and that is this fact that Bid`ah necessitates the alteration and adulteration of the Deen.

Allaah Ta`ala had revealed this Deen (to last) until Qiyaamah. Every human, until the Day of Qiyaamah is bound to this Shariah. This compulsion will remain as long as the Deen is secured upon its original form. Just as the previous nations altered and changed their respective religions to suit their whims and fancies, thereby eradicating its original form, should not happen to this Deen.

Hence those people who innovate Bid`ahs into the Deen are in reality changing the face of the Deen, thereby opening the way for alteration and adulteration in the Deen. Nevertheless, since Allaah Ta`ala has given the undertaking of protecting this Deen, it is through His Mercy and Benevolence that He has made arrangements for its protection. The whims and fancies of people in every era had attempted to change the beautiful face of the Deen, but Allaah Ta`ala had created rightful Ulama in each of these eras to combat these innovations, thereby safeguarding the Deen.

Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) stated:

"Every future generation, will have just and rightful people who will shoulder the knowledge, wherewith they will eradicate the changes of those who indulge in excesses in the Deen, of the falsities of the wrongdoers and of the false interpretations of the ignorant ones." [Mishkaat, page 36]

Alhamdulillah, all Praises are due to Allaah Ta`ala that the Baatil of the people of Baatil will never be successful in changing the beautiful face of this Deen, because Allaah Ta`ala had himself formulated the system for its protection. However, it is a matter without doubt that these people who innovate new, new things into the Deen, not only make apparent their wickedness, they lead many ignorant people astray as well.

(8). You will probably ask why these people innovate new, new things into the Deen, and how come the fear of Allaah Ta`ala does not overcome them. To understand this it would be appropriate to take a stock of the reasons for and the machinations of innovating Bid`aat.

Firstly, the initial motivating factor of Bid`ah is ignorance. Bid`ah has an external façade of 'beauty' and 'appeal', and a person by looking at its outward appearance becomes infatuated with it. The naffs consoles one into believing that and interpreting this as a good and virtuous act, and since they believe it to be a good act, how can it ever be prohibited in the Shariah? Hence, by sufficing upon its outward 'beauty' a person becomes pleased to do it, whilst being oblivious and blind to its inherent and internal evil. A perfect example of this would be if an ugly and disfigured woman is donned in beautiful and exquisite clothing. Onlookers who are unaware of her actual condition merely look at the outward appearance and are infatuated with her looks. From afar she appears to be a beautiful creature.

The general masses are generally restricted to outward facades and appearances, hence they are not as smitten by the Sunnat of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) as they with their innovations.

Secondly, the second reason is the deception and bamboozling of shaitaan. You are quite aware that shaitaan is an open enemy of this Deen, the Sunnat and way of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). He is well aware that this is the path which leads the children of Hadhrat Aadam (alaihi salaam) to Jannat. He is also privy of the fact that even though he tediously leads man astray and involves him in sin, but when he (man) frees himself from the snares of sin, he just needs to present himself in the presence of Allaah Ta`ala just once and repent sincerely and all his (shaitaan's) efforts are washed away. It is reported in a Hadith that when shaitaan was expelled from Allaah Ta`ala's Court, this accursed took an oath that since he was expelled with the coming of and due to Hadhrat Adam (alaihi salaam), he will spare no effort to mislead and deviate the children of Hadhrat Aadam (alaihi salaam). Allaah Ta`ala also took an oath upon His Majesty and Grandeur that regardless of what a great sin man commits, as long he sincerely repents and concedes his mistake, he will be forgiven. [Mishkaat, page 204]

In short, repentance and Astaghfaar has broken the back of shaitaan. It is for this reason that shaitaan has devised this plot of Bid`ahs, wherein he has no fear that man will ever make Tawbah and repent. Shaitaan was a teacher of the angels. He is aware of all the tricks in the book and he knows the interpretations for making Haraam Halaal, etc. that even Mirza Ghulaam Ahmed Qadiani and his offspring accept him as their teacher. He is also an expert on the naffs of man. He has a way of misleading every type of people in different ways. As you see nowadays, where propaganda is able to portray truth as false and vice versa, and the oppressor as the oppressed, and Haqq as Baatil and Baatil as Haqq. This is a small indication of shaitaan's trickery. It is extremely surprising that we see people deny the Haqq when it is as clear as the daylight, and they open the doors of doubt and confusion. Some things are so clearly contrary to the Deen and even rationality that even a child will understand, yet people open the Qur`aan Majeed and Ahaadith to substantiate themselves. Now, if this is not the deception and bamboozling of shaitaan, what else can it be? Referring to this, the Qur`aan Majeed states: ***"Shaitaan has beautified for them their acts."***

In short, in order to create doubt and uncertainty in the hearts of people for the true Deen, and in order to beauty the new innovations, views and Bid`ahs, are all the work and plot of shaitaan, whereby he intends to lead mankind astray without any fear of failure. This matter can be discussed in a voluminous book. Imaams Ghazaali, Ibn Jawzi and Shu`raani (rahmatullahi alaihim) have written books on this specific subject alone.

Thirdly: The third reason which gives rise to Bid`ahs is when the disease of name and fame enters into the people. It is in the natural disposition of man that he is attracted to new things, which he easily adopts. They are therefore on a constant lookout for new things. It is reported in a Hadith that close to Qiyaamah there will be many false (small) dajjaals, who will narrate such things which neither you nor your fathers have not heard before. Be wary of them and save yourself from being led astray by them and from becoming involved in Fitnahs. [Mishkaat, page 28]

Fourthly, One of the main reasons for the initiation of Bid`ah is the imitating of other nations. It is a natural principle and trait of civilisation and society that when different cultures intermingle then instinctively one exercises an effect on the other. That nation which does not preserve its culture, will inadvertently lose some of its characteristics. That nation which is overpowered will fall at the feet of the overpowering one. The Muslim nation, as long as it was victorious over the other nations, protected its culture which remained intact and it had a definite effect on other nations. But, when the Imaan became cold and the cultural protection simmered down, it became susceptible to the other nations. In the present age, the effect of the English culture on the Muslims bears testimony to this fact. One of the effects of this overwhelming of other cultures is that at times the specialities and customs of other cultures, is given a Deeni flavour and stamp. It is a mystery that the Muslims in each area have different Bid`ahs. Those Bid`ahs that are common in India are not so in the Arab lands. And likewise, there are many Bid`ahs that are common in Egypt, Syria, etc, which are not so in India.

Islaam, spread widely and swiftly in India, but unfortunately, no much importance was attached to Deeni Ta`leem and upbringing. This is the reason why those Muslims who left Hinduism and entered the fold of Islaam, could not shake off their Hindi culture. In fact, the intense intermingling of the Muslims with the Hindus introduced other new things in to their (Muslim) culture. It is for this reason that we see the un-Islaamic customs amongst the Indian Muslims on the occasions of marriage, which the womenfolk are more aware than the men would be. This is all the effects and germs of the Hindu culture. A new Muslim convert, Moulana Ubaidullaah, has expounded more on this topic in his book *Tuhfatul Hind*. I am not implying that all the ways and customs of the Indian Muslims are from Hindu culture neither am I saying that all Muslims are involved therein. What I am saying is that most of these customs are not amongst the traits of Islaamic Shariah, rather they can be found amongst the Hindu society. There are many areas where the Muslims are greatly outnumbered by the Hindus and these Muslims were never given an opportunity to learn the Deen properly, that their ignorance is to such an extent that even their names are those of Hindus and they (men) even sport ponytails like the Hindus. It is very clear that when people whose situation is so pathetic, how can they not become involved in Hindu culture and customs. Now, since this foreign (Hindu) culture and customs have become second nature to them (Muslims), they begin to envisage the Shariah as being alien and foreign. Many ignorant and unwary Muslims males and females, when they are made aware of Shar`i Masaa`il, they say: *"New, new Molvis, new, new Mas`alahs"*. It is as though those Hindu customs they have become accustomed to have become an integral part of the Deen and the teachings of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) whereof they have been ignorant all their lives is some new Deen.

These are the few reasons which have given rise to the various Bid`ahs which have crept into the Islaamic Shariah. It is sad to note that the major fault of these innovations lie more with the learned people than the ignorant masses. These (learned) people have given impetus and spurred on these innovations instead of safeguarding the Deen from its evil.

(9). Now I will outline a few principles, which will assist in easily differentiating between Sunnat and Bid`ah. The mother of all principles is the one I have mentioned above, that to understand anything to be part of the Deen which was not practiced by the Salf-e-Saaliheen, is a Bid`ah. Now, we will list some corollary principles:

Firstly: The Shariah has stipulated certain acts for certain occasions. Now, if we, due to our own logic and desires, decide to enact a stipulated action on another occasion, then it will be a Bid`ah. For example, Durood Shareef is read in the last sitting (Tashahhud) of Salaat. Now, if we decide through our own 'Ijtihaad' that since Durood Shareef is no bad thing, in fact, it is a good thing, there will be no harm if we will incorporate it in the first Tashahhud of Salaat. This 'Ijtihaad' of ours will be incorrect and the recital of Durood Shareef in the fist Tashahhud will be regarded as a Bid`ah. The Fuqahaa have ruled that if a person mistakenly recites Durood Shareef in the first sitting, then if he only recited *Allaahumma Salli Ala*, it would not be necessary for him to make Sajdah-e-Sahw, but if he recited *Ala Muhammed*, then Sajdah-e-Sahw would be incumbent upon him. If he does not make Sajdah-e-Sahw, then his Salaat will have to be repeated.

Or for example, if a person makes this 'Ijtihaad' that since *As-Salaato Was Salaamu Alaika Yaa Rasulullaah* is read at the blessed grave of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), he will recite the same whilst sitting in his house. This 'Ijtihaad' of his is incorrect and will be termed a Bid`ah. The reason being that the Fuqahaa of the Ummat have stipulated this specific Durood for this specific occasion, and if its recital at any other occasion was permissible then the Shariah would have consented to it and the Salf-e-Saaliheen would have practiced upon it.

Another example of this is that once in the gathering of the Sahaabi, Hadhrat Saalim Bin Ubaid (radhiAllaahu anhu), a person sneezed and he said: *"As-Salaamu Alaikum"*. Hadhrat Saalim (radhiAllaahu anhu) said: *"Upon you and your mother"*. This person was astonished. Hadhrat Saalim (radhiAllaahu anhu) then said: *"I have said exactly what I heard Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) saying on a similar occasion. Once in a gathering of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) a person sneezed and he said 'As-Salaamu Alaikum', whereupon Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) said: 'Upon you and your mother'. Thereafter he said: 'If any of you sneezes, then he should say*

‘Alhamdulillah’ and the person who hears this should reply with: ‘Yar Hamukallaah’, whereupon the sneezer will say: ‘Yaghfirullahu Li Walakum’.” [Mishkaat, page 406]

The object being that to veer away from the occasion which the Shariah has specified for saying *As-Salaamu Alaikum* and use it for another occasion is a Bid`ah.

Another example of this is to say the Athaan at the graveside. Everyone is well aware that besides the five daily Salaat and Jumuah, to give the Athaan and Iqaamat for the two Eids, Salaat Kusoof and Khusoof (solar and lunar eclipses), Salaatul Istisqaa and Janaazah Salaat is incorrect. The Shariah has not specified this. Now if any person decides to make his own ‘Ijtihaad’ that just as the Athaan is made for people to gather for the five daily Salaat, the same be done here. Hence, Athaan must be called out on these occasions also. Then this ‘Ijtihaad’ of his will be completely wrong, because had the reasoning offered by his honourable brain been worthy of any notice, then the Shariah would have specified the Athaan for all these occasions as well.

Or for example, a person makes this ‘Ijtihaad’ that because it is mentioned in a Hadith that shaitaan flees upon hearing the Athaan, so since it is important to keep shaitaan away from the deceased, we will give the Athaan at the graveside after the burial. Then this ‘Ijtihaad’ will also be summarily dismissed and rejected. The reason being that firstly, shaitaan’s enticement is only for before death, what work has shaitaan with a person who has already passed away? Secondly, had this reasoning been correct then it would have indeed occurred to Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), the Sahaabah and the Taabieen. However, the giving of the Athaan at the graveside is not established by Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), the Sahaabah-e-Kiraam (radhiAllaahu anhum) or the Tabieen (rahmatullahi alaihim). For this reason have the Fuqahaa of the Ahle Sunnat branded this act a Bid`ah. Allaamah Shaami (rahmatullahi alaih) writes under the section *Baabul Athaan,* that it is recorded in the footnote of *Bahrur Raa`iq*, that some Shaafis have proffered the giving of the Athaan on the occasion of death as being Mustahab citing as a proof the giving of the Athaan at the time of birth. However, Ibn Hajar (rahmatullahi alaih) has rejected this analogy. [Raddul Mukhtaar, page 385, vol.1]

He further states under the section of burial of the dead, that the author (of Durrul Mukhtaar) has sufficed upon only stating the Masnoon method of burial. This indicates towards this fact that to give the Athaan on the occasion of burial, as is in vogue nowadays, is NOT Masnoon. Ibn Hajar (rahmatullahi alaih) has clearly stated in his Fatwa that this act is a Bid`ah. [Ibid. page 235, vol.2]

Another example is the common practice of shaking hands after Salaat. The Shariah has specified Salaam and Musaafahah (shaking hands) for those who have come from outside. But, the futile act of those who are sitting in one gathering to suddenly make Musaafahah and Mu`aanaqah (embrace), was never practiced by the Salf-e-Saaliheen. It is unknown where the practice of the latter people sprung from of making Musaafahah after Fajr, Asr, two Eids and other Salaats. The Ulama of the Ahle Sunnat have clearly branded this act a Bid`ah. Sheikh Abdul Haqq Muhaddith Dehlwi (rahmatullahi alaih) states in the commentary of Mishkaat under the section of Musaafahah:

*“This practice of some people making Musaafahah after the general Salaats and Jumuah Salaat is no Sunnat. It is a Bid`ah.”* [Ash`atul Lam`aat, page 22, vol.4]

Allaamah Hadhrat Ali (radhiAllaahu anhu) Qaari (rahmatullahi alaih) states in the commentary of Mishkaat:

“On this basis, some of our Ulama have stated this act to be Makrooh. In this case it is a contemptible Bid`ah.” [Footnote of Mishkaat, page 401]

Allaamah Ibn Aabideen Shaami (rahmatullahi alaih) states:

"And some of our (Hanafi) Ulama and others have expressly stated the impermissibility of the customary Musaafahah after Salaat, notwithstanding the fact that Musaafahah is Sunnat. The reason for this impermissibility is nothing other than (the fact that) it is not reported as being an occasion for Musaafahah by the Salf-e-Saaliheen.)" [Raddul Mukhtaar, page235,vol.2]

I have outlined here just a few examples regarding this matter otherwise there are thousands of examples in front of me. The crux of the matter is that it is a Bid`ah to carry out an action at a time other than which the Shariah has specified.

Secondly: it is a Bid`ah to stipulate conditions for those things which the Shariah has left general.

For example, the Shariah has not specified any particular occasion for visiting the graveyard. Now, to specify a particular time for visiting the grave of a Buzrug and to understand it as being necessary is a Bid`ah. Hadhrat Shah Abdul Azeez Muhaddith Dehlwi (rahmatullahi alaih) was asked whether it was correct to specify a day for visiting the graves or to go there on the day of *Urs*, which was held on a specific day? Hadhrat Shah Sahib (rahmatullahi alaih) replied:

"To specify a particular day for visiting the graves is a Bid`ah, whilst actual visiting (of the graves) is permissible. It was not a habit of the Salf-e-Saaliheen to specify a particular day. It is a Bid`ah for this reason that while in reality it is permissible but the specifying of a time is Bid`ah. An example of this is the making of Musaafahah after the Asr Salaat, which is a custom in certain areas. However there is no harm in making Dua for the deceased on the day of Urs, but to deem it as being necessary is a Bid`ah." [Fataawa Azeezi, page 89, vol.1]

And nowadays with the nonsense that takes place at the *Urs* no rational and right-minded person will regard it as being permissible.

Similarly the Shariah has not specified a particular occasion for conveying *Isaal-e-Thawaab* to Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), buzrugs and general Muslims. Whenever a person desires he may convey *Isaal-e-Thawaab*. Therefore it is a Bid`ah to specify a particular time and a particular way and to understand it as being necessary.

Hadhrat Shah Abdul Azeez Muhaddith Dehlwi (rahmatullahi alaih) was asked whether it was correct to prepare food as *Isaal-e-Thawaab* in Rabiul Awwal on the occasion of the demise of Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) and in Muharram for Hadhrat Hussein (radhiAllaahu anhu) and other Ahle Bait. He replied:

"For this act it is a Bid`ah to specify a certain day and month. Yes, if an action is done at a time when maximum reward is reaped, for example, during the month of Ramadhaan, a believer's actions are multiplied seventy times. Then there will be no harm (to make Isaal-e-Thawaab), because Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) had encouraged it (i.e. to do good actions in this month). According to Hadhrat Ali (radhiAllaahu anhu) those things which Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) had not encouraged or specified a time for, are vain and futile acts, and such acts are contrary to the Sunnat of Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). Those things which are contrary to the Sunnat are Haraam. If anyone desires he may give charity secretly on any day he wishes. So that there is no name and fame involved." [Fataawa Azeezi, page 93]

Based on this rule the Ulama of the Ahle Sunnat have branded the acts of *teeja, saatwa, nowa, chaaliswa* as Bid`ah.

Sheikh Abdul Haqq Muhaddith Dehlwi (rahmatullahi alaih) states in *Sharhe Safar –e-Sa`aadet*:

"It was not the habit of our beloved Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) to gather (the people) for the deceased except for the (Janaazah) Salaat, and to recite Qur`aan Majeed, to make Khatam, neither at the graveside nor any other place. All these acts are Bid`ah and Makrooh. Yes, to make Ta`ziyat, console the bereaved, to exhort them with patience, are Sunnat and Mustahab acts. But the acts of gathering on the third day and other frivolities, and to make use of the wealth of the deceased the right of orphans without bequest are all Haraam and Bid`ah." [page 273]

From this we understand that the custom of *Rasme Qul* which takes place in our areas where people gather and make khatam and enact other customs are all against the Shariah and Bid`ah. Without doubt it is correct to convey *Isaal-e- Thawaab* to the deceased by means of Thikr, Tasbeeh, Tilaawat, Durood Shareef and charity. But to gather at the house of the deceased and to eat food which is prepared with his wealth and to feed others are contrary to the Shariah.

Hadhrat Qaadhi Thanaaullaah Paani Pati (rahmatullahi alaih) mentioned in his Final Bequest:

"After my demise worldly customs such as Daswah, Beeswah, Shashma`ee, etc must NOT be carried out, because Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) has not made bereaving permissible for more than three days, in fact, it is Haraam." [Maala Budda Minh, page 160]

Allaamah Shaami (rahmatullahi alaih) states in the footnote of *Fathul Qadeer:*

"It is nor permissible for the bereaved to entertain (i.e. invite others for meals). Because indeed this (entertainment – inviting for meals) is done during times of happiness and not on the occasion of grief and sorrow. This is a deplorable Bid`ah. It is reported by Imaan Ahmed and Ibn Majah in an authentic narration from Jareer Bin Abdullaah who said: 'We used to regard the gathering at the house of the deceased and the preparation of food as Nauhah (customary lamentation)." [Raddul Mukhtaar, page 240, vol. 2]

Allaamah Shaami (rahmatullahi alaih) also states in *Fataawa Bazaaziya* :

"It is Makrooh to prepare food on the first day, the third day, after a week, to take food to the grave, to make arrangements and invite others for Tilaawat of Qur`aan Majeed, to make Khatam, recital of Surah An`aam or Ikhlaas, etc. It is Makrooh to gather and feed pious people and Qaaris for recitation of Qur`aan Majeed."

Further on he states:

"According to us and the Shaafis, this act is Makrooh (-e-Tahrimi), especially when amongst the inheritors there are minor children and persons who are not present. Besides this, there are may other distasteful events that take place at these occasions, for example many candles and lamps are lit, drums are played, women and beardless boys are gathered, money is paid for the recital of the Qur`aan Majeed, etc., etc. All such things occur in these times. There is absolutely no doubt that these things are Haraam and Baatil." [Ibid.]

Thirdly, it is incumbent to carry out an act of Ibaadat in the way prescribed by the Shariah. It is Haraam and Bid`ah to veer from and change this prescribed way.

For example, the Shariah has stipulated that the Qiraat of the daytime Salaat be read softly and that the nighttime, Jumuah and Eid Salaats be read in a loud voice. Now if a person out of enthusiasm decides to perform Zuhr and Asr with loud Qiraat then this act is a Bid`ah and impermissible.

Or for example, in the loud Salaats *SubhaanakAllaahumma* and *A`uzu Billaah* are read softly. Now if a person decides to read these loudly then it will be impermissible. The son of Hadhrat Abdullaah Bin Mughaffal

(radhiAllaahu anhu) once asked him if it was permissible to recite *Bismillaah* loudly before reciting Surah Faatihah in Salaat. He replied: *"Son! This is a Bid`ah. I performed Salaat behind Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), Hadhrat Abu Bakr (radhiAllaahu anhu) and Hadhrat Umar (radhiAllaahu anhu), and I have not seen any of them recite Bismillaah loudly."*

Or for example, the Ahaadith Shareef specify numerous Duas and Thikrs to be recited after the completion of Salaat, but our Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) and the Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum) never recited these in a loud voice. In fact, each person recited them individually. From this we understand that the Shariah has intended this method for these Duas and Thikrs, and the Ummat has been instructed likewise. Contrary to this, you may have noticed that in some Masaajid people sway their heads from side to side and recite the Kalimah Shareef in loud voices. This method is Bid`ah because it is in opposition to the method of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) and the Shariah.

Fourthly, it is a Bid`ah to perform those Ibaadaat in a congregational form which the Shariah has specified to be individually performed. For example, the Fardh Salaat is read in a congregation and the Shariah has intended it to be performed congregationally. However the Shariah has specified the Nafl Salaat be performed individually. It is for this reason that our Fuqahaa have said that it is Makrooh and Bid`ah to perform Nafl Salaat in congregation.

Allaamah Shaami (rahmatullahi alaih) states:

"It is for this reason that the Ulama have prohibited the performance of congregational Nafl Salaat, as has been initiated by some worshippers, because it has not been narrated to be performed in this fashion on these particular nights. Even though Salaat on its own is a commendable and virtuous act." [Raddul Mukhtaar, page 235, vol. 2]

From this we understand the ruling of performing congregational Salaat on the nights of *Baraat, Mi`raj and Qadr.*

Or for example, the Shariah has stipulated that the Dua after a congregational Ibaadat (Salaat) be made congregationally, and the dua after an individually performed Ibaadat be made individually. Therefore it has not been reported from Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), the Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum) or the Tabieen (rahmatullahi alaihim) that they made congregational Dua after Sunnat or Nafl Salaat. Therefore the custom which is prevalent in our midst where the congregation wait for the Imaam after their Sunnat and Nafl Salaat for him to make a Dua whereupon the people will say *Aameen* is incorrect. There will be no harm if this is done very rarely where the people wait for a pious person, so as to join him in Dua. But to make this a habit is Bid`ah.

Or for example, the Shariah has not stipulated that Thikr, Tasbeeh, Durood Shareef etc. be read congregationally. In fact, whatever a person can read individually he should do so. Now to gather for performing these Thikrs is a Bid`ah.

Citing from *Muheet,* Fataawa Aalimgiri states:

"The recitation of Surah Kaafiroon until the end in congregational form is Makrooh because it is a Bid`ah. This act has neither been reported from the Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum) nor the Tabieen." [Page 217]

Fataawa Bazaaziya states, citing from Fataawa Qaazi Khaan:

"It is Haraam to raise the voice in Thikr. It has been authentically reported from Ibn Mas`ood (radhiAllaahu anhu) that he heard a group of people who were gathered in the Masjid reciting Kalimah Tayyibah and Durood Shareef in a loud voice. He approached them and said: 'we have not seen this during the era of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). I do not regard you except as Bid`atees. He continuously repeated this until he expelled them from the Masjid." [Page 378, vol. 6]

From this we understand that the practice which is in vogue nowadays where people recite in loud voices Kalimah Tayyibah and Durood and salaam in the Masaajid, is a Bid`ah. It is incumbent to cleanse the Masaajid from these innovations.

Or for example, the Shariah has stipulated a specific method for the performance of Janaazah Salaat. However, it has not taught us to make a congregational dua after the Janaazah Salaat neither has this been the practice of our Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), the Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum) or the Taabieen (rahmatullahi alaihim.). For this reason, it is a Bid`ah to make a congregational dua after the Janaazah Salaat and to deem it a Sunnat. If someone wants to make a dua after the Janaazah Salaat, then immediately after the Salaat, without any delay, the bier has to be lifted and taken away. During this procedure each person can make an individual dua.

If the desire is to make dua then, at the graveside one may make abundant dua. We do not have permission to veer from or change the method which has been reported from Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam).

I am certain that big, big Bid`ahs spring up from such sources. The root of all these sources is as I have mentioned earlier, i.e. it is a Bid`ah to introduce as part of the Deen something which was not reported from Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), the Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum) or the Taabieen (rahmatullahi alaihim). Sufficing upon this we will hereunder list a few important rules.

Firstly: some people authenticate Bid`ahs by narrating false and incorrect narrations. It is for this reason the one should remember the following rule which the author of *Durrul Mukhtaar* and Ibn Aabideen Shaami (rahmatullahi alaih) have reported. That is, there are three conditions before one practices upon weak narrations. Firstly, the narration must not be excessively weak, for example, none of its narrators must be a liar or accused of lying. Secondly, that thing (stated in the narration) must conform to some general principle of the Shariah. Thirdly, it must not be regarded as a Sunnah practice. [*Raddul Mukhtaar,* page 128, vol. 1]

It is noted that some people kiss their thumbs upon hearing the blessed name of our Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) during the Athaan and Iqaamat. In substantiating this act of theirs they cite a narration of Hadhrat Abu Bakr (radhiAllaahu anhu), but unfortunately none of the above three conditions apply to this narration.

Firstly, this narration is so fabricated that the experts in the field of *Ilm-e-Hadith* have classified its content as conjured. Secondly, this narration does not conform to any principle of the Deen. Thirdly, the perpetrators of this act not only consider it a Sunnat, in fact, they regard it as a noteworthy *Shi`aar* (hallmark) of Islaam. Allaamah Shaami (rahmatullahi alaih) and other seniors have regarded such acts as a slander against Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam).

The person who fabricated this narration due to his inanity has not considered the fact that the Athaan and Iqaamat is not called out only once in the day, in fact, they is called out ten times. Now, if it was Sunnat to kiss the thumbs at the time of Athaan and Iqaamat, then in the same way as the Athaan and Iqaamat has been transmitted continuously down the annals of Islaamic history so too would this act also have been transmitted likewise. This Hadith would have been reported in all the Kitaabs and it would have been practised by the entire Ummat from east to west.

The Ulama of the Ummat have expressly stated that if there is an authentic Hadith which contradicts a consistent practice of the Ummat (i.e. a practice which has been carried out by the Ummat during all the eras), then we will interpret this narration as having been abrogated or another suitable interpretation will be made. Nevertheless to practice upon a narration which contradicts the continuous practice of the Ummat is incorrect. Imaam Abu Bakr Raazi (rahmatullahi alaih) has explained this rule in great detail in his Kitaab *Ahkaamal Qur`aan*. He has stated that based on this our Ulama have issued the ruling that if the horizon is completely clear then the testimony of one or two men for the sighting of the moon of Ramadhaan or Eid is not sufficient. In fact, the group who testify to the

sighting of the moon must be so large that there can be no possibility of error. Hence to rely upon the testimony of one or two people would mean that we consider the other thousands of inhabitants of that area to be blind.

Imaam Sarakhsi (rahmatullahi alaih) has listed four reasons for refuting a narration:

1. It is contradictory to the Qur`aan Majeed
2. It is contradictory to the *Sunnat-e-Mutawaatirah* and *Mash-hoorah* (unanimous and authentic Sunnat)
3. It is such a mas`alah which applies to every individual yet it is contrary to the general practice
4. This mas`alah was debated upon by the Salf-e-Saaliheen, but they have not given a definite ruling on it. [Usool Sarakhsi, page 364, vol. 1]

He writes regarding the second type:

"Similarly a rare Hadith from Khabar-e-Aahaad will be rejected in so far as practicing upon it, if it is contradictory to a Sunnat-e-Mash-hoorah (famous narration). The reason for this is, the narration which is continuous and its chain is unbroken or it is unanimously agreed upon falls under the category of the Qur`aan Majeed regarding its being absolutely certain. That which is doubtful would be rejected when compared to something which is absolutely certain." [Ibid. page 366]

Hereunder, Imaam Sarakhsi (rahmatullahi alaih) has noted a very delicate point, whose mentioning I feel is necessary at this juncture:

"To differentiate narrations between these two types requires great knowledge. It is also a means of proper safeguarding of the Deen. The root cause of Bid`ahs and whimsical opinion is manifested when weak narrations are pitted against the Qur`aan Majeed and Sunnat-e-Mash-hoorah (i.e. there is no proper differentiation between these categories)."

Fourthly, it is extremely necessary to omit such acts wherein there is imitation of the kuffaar, fujjaar and Bid`atees. Because Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) has in many Ahaadith prohibited imitating the kuffaar and fujjaar (open sinners).

In one Hadith it is mentioned:

"Whoever imitates a nation is amongst them." [Mishkaat page 375]

Based on this principle, the Ulama have prohibited the celebration of *Tazkirah Shahaadat* of Imaam Hussein (radhiAllaahu anhu) which takes place in Muharram.
It is stated in *Usoolus Sifaar* and *Jaami`ur Rumooz*:

"It was asked whether it is permissible to commemorate the occasion of the martyrdom of Hussein (radhiAllaahu anhu) on the 10th Muharram. He replied: 'No! Because indeed this is in imitation of the Rawaafidh.'" [Page 140]

It is established from this principle that all such actions which resemble the Ahle Bid`ah are necessarily to be refrained from.

Fifthly: If there is a doubt in any particular action regarding its being either a Sunnat or Bid`ah, then to omit a Sunnah is better than to commit a Bid`ah [*Bahrur Raa`iq, page 21, vol. 2]*. It is stated in *Raddul Mukhtaar* on page 642, vol. 1:

"If a ruling (regarding an certain act) is suspended between it being a Sunnat or Bid`ah, then it is preferable to leave out a Sunnat than to perpetrate a Bid`ah."

From this principle the ruling of all those actions wherein there appears a doubt between it being a Sunnat or Bid`ah is established. Some people aver an action to be a Sunnat and others say it is a Bid`ah.

If you study carefully the notes that I have outlined regarding Sunnat and Bid`ah and understand them, then you will never be faced with a dilemma regarding establishing who are the Ahle Sunnat. I will conclude here on the final bequest of Hadhrat Imaam Rabbaani Mujaddid Alfe Thaani (rahmatullahi alaih):

"In the opinion of this humble servant, another path to gaining proximity to Allaah Ta`ala is to follow and adhere to the Sunnat of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) and to stay far from any sign of Bid`ah or custom. That person who does not abstain from Bid`ah-e-Hasana just as he abstains from Bid`ah-e-Sayyi`a, will not even get the fragrance of this achievement (proximity to Allaah Ta`ala). To accomplish this nowadays is relatively difficult, because all over there are oceans of Bid`ah wherein people are drowned. Who dares to oppose Bid`ah? Or bring alive a Sunnat?
In this era the Ulama are the ones who initiate the Bid`ah customs and destroy the Sunnat. Those Bid`ahs which have penetrated on all fronts, are not only given consent, in fact, they are even granted the Fatwa of being virtuous. People are even guided towards Bid`ahs." [Maktoob 54, part 2]

May Allaah Ta`ala grant me, you, your companions and all the Muslims the Taufeeq (guidance) to follow and practice upon the final advices of Hadhrat Mujaddid (rahmatullahi alaih).

MOULANA MAUDUDI

You have mentioned that a group of your companions are admirers of Moulana Maududi. According to them there is no other Aalim besides Moulana Maududi. You have asked my opinion regarding this also.

I have already expounded my humble opinion (regarding this matter) in two treatises, namely; *"Tanqeed aur Haqq-e-Tanqeed"* and *"Al-Imaamul Mujaahid"*.

We will also, in fulfilling your request, make brief mention on this topic.

I openly concede to the many good and notable qualities and abilities of Moulana Maududi, however, I have many differences with him as well. There are numerous little and isolated differences I have with him, but here we will suffice on the major issues.

(1). Firstly, the power and the effect of Moulana Maududi's pen is well-known to be one of his advantages and strong points. Nevertheless, my humble opinion is that this is also one of his weakest points and greatest disadvantages. His pen takes a swipe at the believers and non-believers alike, and it does not differentiate between the two. Just like his pen swipes at a kaafir socialist, so it reacts to a sincere and innocent servant of the Deen. With the same power and force he criticises one of his contemporaries he does so on the Salf-e-Saaliheen (pious predecessors).

When he lifts his pen against the atheists and new-formed sects, it seems as though it is a Sheikhul Hadith from Daarul Uloom Deoband that is speaking, and when he attacks the Ahle Haqq, then it appears as though Moulana has taken the pen from Ghulaam Ahmed Qadiani or some other anti-Haqq person.

You are well aware how delicate and precarious the position of Nubuwwat and Risaalat is?

No interpretation should ever be made wherein the status and honour of any Nabi (alaihi salaam) is slurred. The perfect example of our Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) is right before our eyes. Study the entire treasure of Ahaadith , and you will never find a single word which denotes even the slightest disrespect to any Nabi. However, the sharp pen of Moulana Maududi has even reached the sanctity and respect of the Ambiyaa. He mentions with indifference and informally:

a). *" The example of Moosa (alaihis salaam) is like* ***an impatient conqueror****, who marches ahead without making arrangements for those whom he left behind, and behind him rebelliousness spreads like a wild, uncontrolled fire."* [Risaalah Tarjumaan Qur`aan, vol.29, no. 4, page 5]

b). *"Hadhrat Dawood (alaihi salaam) was* ***influenced by the general*** *Israeeli society's* ***custom*** *during his era and asked Urya to issue a Talaaq."* [Tafheemaat, Part 2, page 42, second edition]

c). *"There was base and carnal desire in the act of Hadhrat Dawood (alaihi salaam) and there was* ***inappropriate usage and abuse in his authority.*** *It was an act which did not suit any consenting person in the government."* [Tafheemul Qur`aan, part 4, Surah Swaad, page 327]

d). Regarding Hadhrat Nooh (alaihi salaam) he states: *"Sometimes a delicate and natural occasions arises for a Nabi, even such lofty and honoured humans are prone to give in to their human weaknesses. But when Allaah Ta`ala gave him a warning that the son who left the Haqq and took to Baatil, understand him to be yours purely for this reason that he was born from your back.* ***It was the result of ignorance.*** *He then immediately disregarded this wound in his heart."* [Ibid]

e). Regarding the statement of Hadhrat Yusuf (alaihi salaam): ***"Appoint me as treasurer of the land"****,* Maududi states: *"This was not merely a request for the post of the treasury, as some people assume, in fact,* ***it was a desire for dictatorship.*** *As a result of this, the position which Yusuf (alaihi salaam) achieved was very much* ***similar*** *to the position* ***Mussolini had held in Italy.****"* [Tafheemaat, part 2, page 122]

f). *"Hadhrat Yunus (alaihi salaam)* ***was neglectful in*** *the duty of prophethood. Presumably he left his place before time after losing his patience."* [Tafheemul Qur`aan, Part.2 Surah Yunus, footnote 312, 313]

It is possible that according to Moulana Maududi and his followers, phrases such as "*an impatient conqueror*", *"base and carnal desire*", *"inappropriate usage and abuse in his authority*", *"prone to give in to their human weaknesses*", *"It was the result of ignorance*", *"neglectful in the duty of prophethood*" and *"dictatorship"* do not have any disrespectful connotation, hence, he finds the use of such phrases for the Messengers as acceptable. This judgement can be decided in 2 ways one is that if such words are used for Moulana Maududi himself or for any of his followers, would they feel hurt? For example, if it is stated that Moulana is a dictator, a Hitler or a Mussolini of his time, he acts according to his carnal desires, he is overcome by the emotions of ignorance, he is abusing his authority and he has been deficient in fulfilling his responsibility, etc. etc., then, I am certain, no follower of Moulana will ever tolerate these "arraignments". If these words are deemed derogatory and disrespectful when used in relation to Moulana, then let us be fair, how can they ever possibly be suitable for the lofty status of the Ambiyaa. Listen to another statement of a similar nature:

"Here you should understand the reality ***of the human weakness that*** *was apparent of Adam (alaihi salaam). A spontaneous emotion caused by satanic encouragement made him negligent. As soon as his self-control languished he fell from the lofty pedestal of obedience* ***into the pit of sin.****"* [Tafheemul Qur`aan, page 133, vol. 3]

If the name of Hadhrat Adam (alaihi salaam) is substituted in this text by Moulana Maududi's name, then I feel that there will be complaints in his circle and a storm of protest will erupt in Pakistan. From this it can be realized that this statement is impolite and insulting.

Concerning one of the holy wives of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) he says: *"She became a little bold in opposition to Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) and began abusing him."* [Haft Roza Asia Lahore, 19th November 1976]

Maududi has made this statement regarding Nabi's (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) wife, but I regard it more insulting to Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) than to his wife. It is obvious that the respected wife of Moulana is not more disciplined or holier than the wife of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). If any of his followers has to comment that Moulana's wife speaks out of turn in his presence, then Moulana will regard this statement as insulting and humiliating. Therefore I cannot understand how a statement which is regarded as irreverent for Moulana could not be offensive for Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) and his wives.

In short, are such phrases which emanate from Maududi's pen, disrespectful to the Ambiyaa (alaihimus salaam) or not? One way of deducing this, as has been explained above, is that if these words are used for Moulana and cause discomfort to his followers, then it should be accepted that they are also disrespectful for the Ambiyaa (alaihimus salaam), and hurt the feelings of those who believe in and accept prophethood.

The second method of deducing this is to investigate whether these statements, when used in Urdu, constitute a derogatory connotation or not? After testing these two standards, it can be concluded that these words are disrespectful, hence the Moulana should abstain from its usage. In fact, he should make Tawbah. Because disrespect for the Ambiyaa (alaihi salaam) is a sign of losing one's Imaan.

(2). After the Ambiyaa (alaihimus salaam), the most sacred group is that of the Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum),especially the four rightly guided caliphs. They form the medium between the Ambiyaa and the Ummat like that of Barzakh. Whatever has emanated from Maududi's pen in his books "*Tajdeed Wa Ahyaa-e-Deen*", "*Khilaafat Wa Mulukiyat*", "*Tafheemul Qur`aan*" etc. regarding Sayyidina Uthmaan, Ali, Talha, Zubair, Aishah, Muawiyah, Abu Moosa Ash`ari, Amr bil Aas, Uqbah and other Sahaabah, I regard as pure Shiasm. After studying Moulana's writings I have come to the conclusion that just as he is unaware of the reverence of prophethood, similarly is he unaware of the ranks of the Sahaabah. I wish he could have at least remembered one statement of Mujaddid Alfe Thaani:

"No Wali can reach the status of the Sahaabah. Hadhrat Uwais Qarni (rahmatullahi alaih) with all his loftiness could not match the lowest Sahaabi because he did not achieve the benefaction of the company of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). Someone asked Abdullaah bin Mubarak (rahmatullahi alaih) as to who is nobler, Hadhrat Muawiyah or Umar bin Abdil Azeez. He replied:"The dust that settled in the nose of Muawiyah's horse in the company of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) is by far better than Umar bin Abdil Azeez (rahmatullahi alaih)."

At this stage it is essential to point out that all the actions of the entire Ummat cannot match the merit of the Sahaabah's companionship with Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). Just visualize the two Rakaats of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) which the Sahaabah were fortunate to witness. Can the Salaat of the entire Ummat collectively match those two Rakaats? If the latter part of the Ummat gives a mountain of gold in charity, can they equal the virtue achieved by a Sahaabi who gave a little barley in the path of Allaah? Measure and analyse every good deed in this fashion.

Surpassing the virtue of companionship is the fact that the Sahaabah were the students of that Madrasah whose teacher and guide was Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) and whose syllabus was prepared in the heavens.

Their nurturing was carried out by heavenly revelation. Their examinations were taken by the Knower of the unseen. After they were tried and tested in every aspect of their learning and spiritual nurturing, Allaah granted them the degree of radhiAllaahu anhum i.e. Allaah is pleased with them and they with him. Thereafter he gave them the title of being the best of mankind, who were chosen for the guidance of man. If you reflect carefully you will notice that after the Ambiyaa, the upbringing of the Sahaabah was also done under the guidance and supervision of Divine Revelation and their certificate of virtue was also granted by Allaah Ta`ala Himself.

The followers of Maududi try to side step the issue by saying that whatever he wrote was extracted from historical sources and that it is a testimony of the excellence of his pen, that he has collected scattered bits of information and formulated a flowing history. I respectfully wish to inform them that their statements are wrong for several reasons:

Firstly, whatever Moulana wrote is neither historical truth nor a true picture of the lives of the Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum) but rather a brew formed by his theories and imaginations. Today fiction is common. Generally people do not express so much interest in historical truth as they do in colourful fictitious tales. Hence Moulana has written a fictitious tale of the Sahaabah in the name of *Khilaafat wa Mulukiyat* (name of his book).

Secondly, a devious attempt is being made in Europe to distort, besmirch and degrade the noble personalities of Islaam. The energies of the Jewish orientalists are being spent on this task. They are also collating the scattered bits of history to form a hypothetical picture. They are convincing the world that they are presenting the realities of history without any mixture of prejudice. However contrary to their claims, their prejudice and enmity towards Islaam cannot be concealed due to the manner in which they express simple, straightforward statements incorrectly and draw the unwary into their traps and ploys.

It is totally inconceivable that a person who believes in Allaah and his Rasool (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) could follow the way of the orientalists, but unfortunately Maududi's book *"Khilaafat wa Mulukiyat"* has adopted this style. The poor reader is led to think that Moulana is gathering true historical facts but he does not realize what the prejudices of the author are, viz. adding and deleting from his own side. In short, just as the orientalists failed in concealing their enmity for Islaam, notwithstanding all the deceptions, Moulana also could not conceal his enmity for the Sahaabah in his work. If the interpretations of Maududi are correct, then the achievements of the orientalists are more rightful to be called correct. If the method of the Jewish Orientalists is incorrect, then by the same token will Maududi's work be incorrect.

Thirdly, one must realize that the Sahaabah were human beings, not angels. They were not free from sins. Leave aside minor slips and mistakes, they even committed major sins. What kind of Deen is it not to admit their faults?

Firstly, it must be noted that Maududi had to take recourse to Waqidi and Kalbi (historians) etc. to sift out the errors of the Sahaabah, whereas Allaah the Knower of the unseen was well aware of their internal and external conditions. He knew the condition of their hearts and minds. He also knew that they were humans who are not flawless and that they will commit sins in the future. In spite of comprehensively knowing all this, Allaah granted them the honourable title of *"radhiAllaahu anhum waradhu anh"*, because one fault of theirs was better than a hundred correct actions of ours. What right has Maududi to criticize these great personalities? Is this not an open confrontation with Allaah Ta`ala that He has announced His eternal pleasure notwithstanding for them all their faults, yet Maududi is not prepared to show his satisfaction for them.

Secondly, let us accept that they did commit sins, and bearing in mind that Allaah is pleased with them because of their inherent virtue, then what can be achieved by preparing a list of their crimes after 1400 years, except despoiling one's own book of deeds?

Had these personalities been present today, he could have informed them of their faults. However now after 1400 years have passed an now to nitpick and every sin of theirs, it seems that the underlying aim of selecting their faults

from incorrect sources and presenting this whole heap of nonsense to the people can only be to remove the love which the Muslims have for the Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum) and replace it with enmity and hatred. Is this the requirement of Deen and Imaan?

Fourthly, the delicate subject which Maududi has touched upon in his work *"Khilaafat wa Mulukiyat"* is called *"Mushajaratus Sahaabah"* or difference of opinion among the Sahaabah in the books of scholastic theology. This chapter of Imaan is a most delicate bridge which is sharper than a sword and thinner than a strand of hair. Accordingly the pious predecessors have at this occasion always maintained respect and advised control of the tongue and the pen, because not only later generations, but also the contemporaries of the Sahaabah have lost their Imaan in this delicate ground. The elders of the Ummat have always cleared the way of the thorns which the irreligious people have placed, but Maududi disregards them calling them "representatives of defence". He rejects their statements as "unnecessary oratory" and "illogical interpretations" and accumulates all these thorns by means of which the Khawarij and Shiahs lost their Imaan and presents them to the latter generation. Is this a service to Islaam or is it the blowing of a new spirit into Kharijiyat and Shiasm?

Does Maududi and his followers hope to be raised with the Ahle Sunnat after this achievement, and not with the Kharijites and Shiahs? I ponder a thousand times to try and figure out whether Maududi has written this book to guide the new generation or to divert them from the straight path.

Fifthly, perhaps the most troublesome idea is that Maududi has established a Shar`i court of 'investigation' for incidents that occurred 1400 years ago and appoints himself the judge. The elite Sahaabah are brought into this court as criminals. Testimony is taken from the likes of Waqidi and Kalbi etc. the chief prosecutor is the judge himself. If the pious predecessors plead for their innocence and present evidence then he rejects it by calling it unnecessary and illogical interpretations. After this one-sided case Maududi prepares his investigative report and presents it to the people in the name of *"Khilaafat wa Mulukiyat"*.

Irrespective of the integrity and honesty that was considered in these investigations, how much care was taken in critically examining the evidence and how impartial "the judge" was in narrating the incidents including his own ideas, I must respectfully question Maududi's right to pass judgement in his self made court. On what ground does he consider himself as having the status or right or to convict the students of Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam)?
I do not know what opinion Maududi or his followers have in this regard, but would like to point out that the hearing of the case of the Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum) can only be done by someone superior to them viz. Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) or The Judge of all judges (Allaah Ta`ala) Himself and definitely not Maududi! No individual in the Ummat has the authority of interfering in the affairs of this sacred group. The example of someone uttering anything against the Sahaabah is that of a street-sweeper arranging a court in the marketplace and giving judgement against the members of parliament.

The sixth point that should be well understood is that Allaah Ta`ala granted the Sahaabah the honour and rank of being guides and guardians of the Ummat. We are commanded to love and follow in their footsteps. This is stressed upon in the Qur`aan. It is not only impermissible or Haraam to criticise them, but it is also an act which necessitates the Curse of Allaah Ta`ala.

Maududi himself admits:

"In my opinion the person who criticises the Sahaabah is not only a flagrant sinner (Faasiq), but his Imaan is also in doubt. 'Whoever has hatred for them, it is because he has hatred for me [Hadith].'"

Whoever has read Maududi's book *"Khilaafat wa Mulukiyat"* will testify that the Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum) are openly degraded in it and the author's animosity for the Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum) is quite apparent. Under the title "Termination of the superiority of the law", Maududi writes:

(a) *"Another abominable innovation that originated in the rise of Muawiyah is that he and the governors under his command used to vilify and swear Hadhrat Ali (radhiAllaahu anhu) from the pulpit, to such an extent that in Masjidun Nabawi on the mimbar of Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) right in front of Rowdah-e-Nabawi, the beloved cousin of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) was vilified. The descendants and relatives of Ali (radhiAllaahu anhu) used to bear abuse. To swear any person after his death is ethically despicable. To pollute the Jumuah sermon with this filth an extremely repulsive act."* [Khilaafat Wa Mulukiyat, page 147]

(b) *"Hadhrat Muawiyah (radhiAllaahu anhu) openly violated the Qur`aan and Sunnah in the matter of the distribution of the booty. According to the Qur`aan the Hadith one fifth of the total spoils of war were to be given to public treasury and the remaining four portions were to be distributed amongst the army that participated in the battle. But Muawiyah gave the order that the gold and silver were to be first taken out for him and the remaining distributed according to the Shar`i rule."* [Ibid]

(c) *"The enrolling of Ziyad ibn Sumayah was also one of the acts of Muawiyah which he perpetrated for political aims and thereby contravened an accepted law of Shariah. This was a completely unlawful act."* [Ibid, page 175]

(d) *"Hadhrat Muawiyah (radhiAllaahu anhu) regarded his governors as above the law and openly rejected Shar`i proceedings against their violations."* [Ibid.]

The abovementioned texts of Maududi where Sayyidina Muawiyah (radhiAllaahu anhu) has been accused are totally unfounded and baseless. The Ulama have clarified the true facts. I only want to ask whether the people who believe in these tales of Maududi have love or hatred for Hadhrat Muawiyah (radhiAllaahu anhu) and the other Sahaabah and Tabieen of that era? Do they feel proud of following them or do they curse them?

Has Maududi in these texts insulted Hadhrat Muawiyah (radhiAllaahu anhu) or sang couplets of praise? Let us consider his (Maududi's) own statement that "not only is he (one who vilifies the Sahaabah) a flagrant sinner but his Imaan is also in doubt." Has he not flagrantly violated the Sahaabah and does he not fall within the purview of his own declaration? I do not feel that Maududi will ever regret this fault of his but let me reiterate that the result of his stubbornness is extremely dangerous.

It has been mentioned that a Shiah Aalim viz. Muhaqqiq Tusi vilified the Sahaabah in the conclusion of his book *"Tajreedul Aqaaid"*. At the time of his death impurities were expelled from his mouth as had happened to Ghulaam Ahmed Qadiani. He pointed to it asking: *"What is this?"* A learned scholar who was present replied: *"This is the same filth which you had partaken at the conclusion of 'Tajreed'"*. May Allaah Ta`ala protect us from such blasphemy. Ameen.

(3). If the most sacred group of Islaam the Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum) are not spared in Maududi's opinion, then how is he going to value the saints, jurists, Muhadditheen, Ulama and Sufiya who came thereafter. Consequently he has advised his followers that criticising the elders of the Ummat is a part of Imaan. He writes in the explanation of the Kalimah under section 3 of his *"Dastoor Jamaat-e-Islaami"*:

"Do not make anyone besides Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) a basis of truth. Do not regard anyone as free of criticism, nor be involved in anyone's "mental slavery". Judge every person according to the perfect standard shown by Allaah Ta`ala." (Page 24)

Maududi has used the term "mental slavery" to mean Taqleed. i.e. to put so much trust in the piety, honesty, knowledge and practice of any particular individual or group so that there remains no need to ask for any proof. In other words, if any member of his group puts his trust in anyone besides Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) regarding that person's way as correct and did not criticise him, then according to Maududi he is out of the pale of

Islaam. Hence, according to him the primary condition for embracing Islaam is that every person should keep the complete standard shown by Allaah in front of him and criticise the whole Ummat. Thereafter Maududi glanced at the Ummat and was extremely disappointed to notice that the Ummat was void since its inception and not even one 'perfect man' was born. In his famous book *"Tajdeed wa Ahya-e-Deen"* under the caption *"Khilaafat e Raashidah"* he writes:

"The Seal of all Prophets (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) completed all this work in 23 years. After him Islaam was blessed with two perfect leaders who continued the work with the same conciseness. Thereafter the reigns of power were transferred to Hadhrat Uthmaan (radhiAllaahu anhu) and for several years the situation remained as it was during the Nabi's time." (Page 36)

Thereafter under the title "The invasion of ignorance" he writes:

"However due to the extreme pace at which the Islaamic Empire was expanding, the task was becoming more and more difficult. Furthermore Hadhrat Uthmaan (radhiAllaahu anhu) on whom this whole responsibility rested, did not possess all those capabilities which his predecessors were endowed with. Accordingly, during his rule ignorance was given an opportunity to infiltrate the Islaamic social structure. Hadhrat Uthmaan (radhiAllaahu anhu) endeavoured to prevent this peril but was unable to do so. Thereafter Hadhrat Ali (radhiAllaahu anhu) advanced and attempted to save the Islaamic political hierarchy from the influence of jaahiliyyah, but the sacrifice of his life could not prevent this inverted revolution. Eventually the Khilaafat which was on the line of prophethood, terminated. Scattered kingdoms replaced it and in this manner the foundation of the government was established on jaahiliyyah instead of Islaamic foundations. After controlling the government, jaahiliyah gradually began penetrating social life like a cancerous disease, because the key of authority was now in its hands. Islaam was deprived of a government and could not prevent its effects from increasing. The greatest difficulty was that jaahiliyyah did not appear clandestinely but came in the form of a Muslim. Had there been open atheists, polytheists and disbelievers then perhaps the confrontation would have been easy, but in the forefront was the admission of unity and prophethood, practice on Salaat and fasting, evidence from the Qur`aan and Hadith and behind all that jaahiliyyah was secretly doing its task." (Page 36-37)

Maududi has drawn this sketch of the period 20-25 years after Nabi's (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) demise. According to his words, this jaahiliyyah had become a facade for Islaam and this jahaalat had now masqueraded as the Islaamic world. Thereafter he describes what happened to the Muslims and Islaam:

"When a 'Muslim' controls the rule and politics of jaahiliyyah, when he is the teacher of jaahili school, when he is a sage on the mat of jaahiliyyah then such a deception abides, that very few people can be saved from such fraud. The most dangerous side of this inverted revolution was that all three kinds of jaahiliyyah wore the garb of Islaam and began spreading their roots and their effects began increasing daily.

(1). Pure jaahiliyyah consolidated its control on the government and on wealth. The name was that of a Khilaafat but it was in essence the same kingdom which Islaam came to efface. No one had the courage to call the kings 'God' anymore, hence the adage: "the king is the shadow of Allaah" was coined. Based on this false ideology, the kings chose the same status of unconditional obedience that exclusively belongs to Allaah.

(2). The polytheistic jaahiliyyah attacked the masses, removed them from the path of Tauheed and misled them towards countless deviations. Flagrant paganism could not find a footing, but there was not a single type of polytheism which did not find its way amongst the Muslims.

(3). Jaahiliyyah attacked the Ulama, Mashaaikh, the abstinent and the pious and began spreading those evils which I have previously mentioned amongst them. Due to the effect of this jaahiliyyah, philosophy, monastic morals, a sense of helplessness in every aspect of life spread through the Muslim society. Not only did it influence literature and science but in reality it made the good elements of society lax by giving them a 'mafia injection'. It

consolidated the ignorant system of kingship and narrowed the thinking in the Islaamic arts and sciences. It confined all religiousness to a few specific acts." (Page 38-41)

Read this entire tale of Maududi again and ponder that if jaahiliyyah had overcome Islaam in the presence of the Sahaabah and Tabieen, and Islaam could not regain the keys of power from that time, then can there be any Ummat more unsuccessful than the Muslim Ummat? Are not the statements of Maududi an echo of the mockery which the atheists and communists of today are making of Islaam.

Thereafter under the caption: "Need for Mujaddids" he tells us:

"In the midst and due to the thorough infiltration of theses three types of jahaalat, there came a need for Mujaddids to restore Islaam to its former glory". (Page 41)

Then from pages 48 to 50 under the title 'FUNCTION OF RENEWAL" he describes in detail those faculties in which there is a need for a renaissance. He has in his own words classified them under nine categories, viz:

(1) A correct evaluation of the environment
(2) A plan for reform
(3) Specification of the limits
(4) Intellectual revolution
(5) An attempt at practical reform
(6) Ijtihaad in Deen
(7) An effort at defence
(8) Revival of the Islaamic system
(9) An attempt for a universal revolution

After an explanation of these nine categories, he says:

"After carefully pondering over these nine points it can be realised that the first three are indispensable for every person intending a revival, but the remaining six points are not collectively conditions for a Mujaddid. In fact,a person who has attained success in two, three or four of these categories can also be called a Mujaddid. However he will be a partial Mujaddid. A complete Mujaddid can only be one who has achieved distinction in all the categories and thereby fulfil the rights of the Prophet's Inheritance." (Page 50)

The question arises whether there was a perfect Mujaddid to save Islaam from the clutches of jaahiliyyah or was there anyone who was able to fulfil the rights of the Prophet's Inheritance? Maududi gives an answer in the negative. He remarks:

"By glancing at history it can be realized that till now no perfect Mujaddid has been born. Umar bin Abdil Azeez was close to achieving this status but was unsuccessful. After him whichever Mujaddid was born worked in a specific faculty or in a few faculties. The place of a perfect Mujaddid is as yet empty. But the mind, nature and the pace of the world's conditions demand that such a leader be born now or in the near future. His name will be Imaam Mahdi." (Page 51)

In short, according to Maududi no perfect man has been created. It is apparent that you will only place your trust in a person whom you regard as of a high calibre. Maududi's opinion that there was no person of a truly high calibre in this Ummat, quite clearly explains why he does not regard anyone in the entire Ummat as being beyond criticism and as to why he does not trust anyone.

However Maududi's courage and that of his followers is commendable. He states that from the early days of the Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhu) jaahiliyyah has been in control. The kings have assumed a status like gods. The

masses are ensnared in the grip of the polytheistic 'jaahiliyyah'. The Ulama and elders are administering 'mafia injections' to the people. Islaam is floundering in the quagmire of jaahiliyyah, but no Sahaabi, Tabiee, Imaam, Muhaddith or Mujaddid can arise to snatch the keys of power from jaahiliyyah. This is tantamount to saying that the entire Ummat is deprived of fulfilling the Inheritance of Prophethood for 1400 years. They are either working as agents of the jaahiliyyah or are caught in the deception and fraud of it. In this Ummat, even if Mujaddids appear, they do not fulfil their entire objective. None of them have accomplished their actual task. They, according to Maududi are incapable of fulfilling the rights of the Prophet's (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) inheritance. Can there be an expression that shows the Ummat to be more at a disadvantage and barren than this? When I look at the image that Maududi has invoked of this Ummat and think of my predecessors, my head hangs in shame. I congratulate Maududi and his associates because, notwithstanding all these factors, he does not have the slightest reservation or any shame in counting himself amongst this crippled Ummat. If this tale regarding the deprivation of the Ummat is accepted as true, then this Ummat does not remain "the best of nations" as stipulated in the Qur`aan and Hadith but becomes "the worst of nations".

This entire narrative of Maududi is a fairy tale reminiscent of the style of Shiah ideology. There is no objective or accomplishment except to besmirch the elders and to cut off the new generation from them. Whoever harbours belief in the unseen about Maududi's ideology, may regard it as accurate, but a person who has faith in the perpetuality of Islaam, the explicitness of the Qur`aan and Hadith and the truth of Rasulullaah's prophethood, cannot for even a moment be taken in by Maududi's ridiculous ideology.

I am not advocating an seraphic quality for the entire Ummat, such that no individual has committed any sin, nor do I intend defending unjust kings, the perverse masses, the misguided Ulama and the 'sufi-tradesmen'. However I am protesting against Maududi's logic in so far as his conclusion that this Ummat has collectively become a representative of jaahiliyyah instead of Islaam. According to him Islaam has become a handmaid and only a handful of individuals are practising true Islaam. He states:

"These two factors were not sufficient for the original aim of sending the Ambiyaa (alaihimus salaam). Nor was it sufficient that control be in the hands of the jaahiliyyah while Islaam assumes a secondary status, nor that some individuals here and some there be practical Muslims and that the combination of Islaam and jaahiliyyah be spread in the society. Hence there was a need and still is in every age for such powerful personalities, groups and institutions which could alter the damaged pace of life and revert it to Islaam." [Tajdeed Wa Ahyaa-e-Deen, page 42]

Maududi is openly stating that after a mere quarter century from the time of Rasulullaah's (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) demise, the whole Ummat forgot the aim of prophethood. This is a crime of such magnitude that it gives the whole Ummat and its elders the status of the worst criminals. Therefore either one of two things are incorrect; either Maududi fails to understand the duty of the Messengers, or his opinion regarding the Ummat is incorrect. By portraying the Sahaabah, Tabieen and the elders of the Ummat as criminals before the new generation, he has been unfair to the Ummat and unjust in his opinion. To cause the new generation to despise the predecessors is not an achievement worthy of Maududi's pen. The Shiahs, Rawaafidh, etc. have been executing this task from before. In present times the Qadianis, Chakralwis, Parwezis and Communists have taken up the same function. Whoever wishes to build the foundation for a new ideology must firstly collide with the predecessors. Unfortunately Maududi's swift pen has achieved the same result.

(4). After crippling the entire Ummat, there remained a need to extract worms from the fruits of achievements realized by the Ummat's great leaders, so that no respect and reverence for any saint manifests itself in the heart and mind of the new generation and none of Maududi's followers become 'mental slaves' of any predecessor. He has achieved this aim with very high hopes. According to him there were but a handful of individuals who attained any feat worth mentioning in the field of revivalism. Amongst these are: the Khalifah Umar bin Abdil Azeez, the four Imaams viz. Imaam Abu Hanifah, Imaam Maalik, Imaam Shaafi

and Imaam Ahmad bin Hambal, Imaam Ghazaali, Ibn Taymiyah, Mujaddid Alfe Thaani, Shah Waliullaah, Sayid Ahmad Shaheed and Moulana Muhammad Ismail Shaheed (rahmatullahi alaihim ajmaeen).

Regarding Umar bin Abdil Azeez (rahmatullahi alaih), Maududi has already stipulated, as mentioned before, that *"Umar bin Abdil Azeez was close to achieving the status but was unsuccessful."*

In his opinion the four Imaams managed merely to arrange the laws of Islaam from their origins in a principled form, but they achieved nothing in the way of the duty of the prophets, as if to say they did not actually fulfil the realities of their task, which was the prime objective..

With regards to Imaam Ghazaali, he states : *"There existed certain educational and ideological deficiencies in Imaam Ghazaali's work of revivalism. They can be categorised into three sections:*
The first concern those deficiencies due to his weakness in the field of Hadith. Secondly, those deficiencies arising from his total inclination towards logic. Thirdly those faults arising from his inclination towards Tasawwuf to a greater extent than was necessary." [Tajdeed Wa Ahyaa-e-Deen, page 78]

After mentioning about Imaam Ghazaali, he comments on the work of Sheikhul Islaam, Ibn Taymiyah: *"The reality is that he was unable to form any political movement by which there could arise a revolution in the government, thereby allowing the keys of power to be transferred from the control of jaahiliyyah to Islaam."* [Ibid, page 86]

After Ibn Taymiyah he mentions the feats of Mujaddid Alfe Thaani, Shah Waliullaah, Sayid Ahmad Shaheed and Moulana Ismail Shaheed, he says: *"The first point which arouses apprehension in me regarding the revival work from the time of Mujaddid Alfe Thaani till Shah Sahib and his successors is that they failed in fully diagnosing the illness of the Muslims regarding Tasawwuf which these people have advocated. In its very essence it is derived from the original Tasawwuf of Islaam and is no different from Ihsaan. But those factors which I feel should be refrained from are the signs of Tasawwuf, the language of Tasawwuf and the maintenance of those methods which resemble the ways of Tasawwuf."* [Ibid, page 131]

It is apparent that Maududi harbours a dislike for Tasawwuf, its term and methods. However he does not have the courage to label the Tasawwuf of these elders as un-Islaamic, but he mocks it by saying: *"Just as a Halaal substance such as water becomes prohibited when it is harmful for a sick person, similarly this practice, although legal, is liable for discarding because the Muslims have been administered with opium under its (Tasawwuf) guise. These chronically ill patients upon hearing it once again, remember their opium which kept them in a slumber for centuries."* [Ibid, page 132]

"Mujaddid Alfe Thaani and Shah Sahib were aware of this disease of the Muslims but they did not realize the seriousness of this illness. Consequently both of them administered the same medicine to their patients, which proved destructive for this illness. As a result the followers of both men began to be influenced by this age old disease." [Ibid. Page 133]

"Although Moulana Ismail Shaheed understood this reality well, he adopted the same method as Ibn Taymiyah. This method is found in the literature of Shah Waliullaah and some effect of it remained in the writings of Shah Ismail Shaheed. This series of sage-disciple (peer-mureedi) continued in the movement of Sayid Sahib. Accordingly this movement could not remain pure from the germs of the disease of Sufism." [Ibid. Page 134]

These are the elders of the Ummat which Maududi has selected in his presentation. Only a fool can, after regarding this criticism as truth, have any trust in these elders and follow their examples. Once again examine the nine categories of revival which Maududi has presented. Firstly he mentioned the correct evaluation of one's environment. In his opinion, all the elders from Imaam Ghazaali till Shah Ismail Shaheed with the exception of Ibn

Taymiyah failed to diagnose the illness of the Muslims correctly, and instead continued administering "mafia injections" to them.

After pondering over these two facts, it can be concluded that these personalities were Sufis and according to Maududi, Sufism is the actual disease of the Muslims. If these personalities were themselves infected with Sufism, how could they possibly cure such an incurable disease of the Ummat? If this was the condition of these saintly elders whom the world regards as Mujaddids, then what will be the state of the rest of the Ulama of this Ummat?

(5). If all the seniors of the Ummat were deprived of Maududi's and his followers' trust, then how can the knowledge which we received through them be trusted as otherwise. Maududi has mentioned his mistrust for each one individually. He has thus totally discredited the elders and has convinced his followers consequently of a need for Ijtihaad in all the Islaamic sciences. Regarding the science of Tafseer he writes:

"There is no need for a Tafseer (commentary) of the Qur`aan. A highly qualified professor who has studied the Qur`aan in depth, and has the ability to teach the Qur`aan in a modern way is sufficient. By means of his lectures he can develop the skill of understanding the Qur`aan in intermediate students. Thereafter he can teach the Qur`aan for the BA. Degree in such a manner that they progress sufficiently in Arabic and thereby become fully acquainted with the spirit of Islaam." [Tanqeehaat, page 193]

Regarding the science of Hadith, Maududi has written in his *Tafheemaat* on pages 287 and 298 under the caption *"Maslak-e-I`tidal"* the summary of which is that the establishment of the authenticity of a Hadith is not dependant on the pronouncement of the Muhadditheen, but is dependant on understanding the temperament of Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). The infamous rejecter of Hadith Ghulaam Ahmad Parwez once wrote that his opinion regarding Hadith is not more serious than Maududi's. The summary of Maududi's opinion in his own words is as follows:

"The services of the Muhadditheen are accepted. It is also an accepted fact that whatever material they produced for examining the Ahaadith was extremely useful in research for the Ahaadith of the first era. Now is it correct to place total trust in them? They were after all only humans. They could not surpass the limits that Allaah has established for attaining knowledge. Naturally, their work was not devoid of human errors. Then how can it be said that whatever they classified as correct, is in reality correct." [Tafheemaat, page 292]

Maududi searches for every opportunity to criticise the Sahaabah because he has a special affinity to revile them. Because the Sahaabah were the first narrators of Hadith, it was essential to discredit them as well as the other narrators of Hadith, in order to make the chain of narration dubious.

Consequently he writes:

"Firstly it is extremely difficult to ascertain the character, strength of memories and other internal characteristics of the narrators; and secondly those people who formulated opinions about them were themselves not free of human weaknesses." [Ibid. Page 292/3]

Concerning this he writes further:

*"Above all this, it is strange that at times the Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum) were overcome **by human weaknesses** and they used to **attack one another**."* [Ibid. Page 294]

As long as the science of Hadith does not conform with Maududi's conception of the Prophet's (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) character, he will regard it as unworthy of recognition and without hesitation reject all the accepted

Ahaadith of the entire Ummat. There are numerous examples at my disposal, but I am constrained to overlook them for the sake of brevity.

Among the various sciences of Islaam, after the science of Tafseer and Hadith, the most important is Fiqh (jurisprudence). He (Maududi) has so much aversion for it that at times he gives warnings of Jahannum regarding it. In his book *"Huququs Zawjain"* he writes under a certain heading:

*"On the Day of Qiyaamah these sinners will be brought with their religious leaders in the presence of Allaah. Allaah will ask them: 'Did we grant you knowledge and intelligence so that you do not make use of it?' Was Our Kitaab and Sunnah of Our Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) given to you so that you could remain sitting with it while the Muslims continued to be led astray? We have made Our Deen easy. What right did you have to make it difficult? We gave the command to follow the Qur`aan and the Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). Who compelled you to supercede them and follow your predecessors?"* (Moulana here makes the assumption that the pious predecessors of Islaam had not followed the Qur`aan and Sunnah and that they had ruled contrary to it, Astaghfirullah!)

"We kept the solution for every problem in the Qur`aan. Who asked you not to touch the Qur`aan, and regard the books written by men as sufficient? There is no hope for any Aalim that he will find refuge in the laps of the authors of Kanzud Daqaa`iq, Hidaaya and Aalimgiri (all Kitaabs of Fiqh). However the ignorant will be given a chance to answer thus: ***'O our Rabb, indeed we followed our leaders and our seniors, and they led us astray. Our Rabb, give them double punishment and curse them severely'."*** [Huququs Zawjain, page 98]

(Maududi has translated these 2 verses in Tafheemul Qur`aan as follows: "O Sustainer of ours, we followed our leaders and elders and they misguided us. O Sustainer, give them double punishment and curse them severely. (Tafheemul Qur`aan, vol.4, page134. sixth edition, June 1973)

This whole text reflects Maududi's internal attitude towards the pious predecessors and jurists of this Ummat. Hatred and animosity of such intensity is dripping from each word, such that no Muslim should feel towards any lowly Muslim, let alone the pious predecessors of the Ummat.

The verses of the Qur`aan which he has quoted here refer to the disbelievers who will on the Day of Qiyaamah say in the presence of Allaah:

'O our Rabb, we were prevented from following in the footsteps of the Ambiyaa due to our leaders and our seniors, and they led us astray. The actual fault is theirs. Give them double punishment and curse them severely'."

(These verses have been deleted from the new edition of his book.)

When I read this extract concerning the elders of the Ummat I find it difficult to determine whether Maududi was in a stupor at the time of writing it or he, in reality actually regarded them to be out of the pale of Islaam, like the Kharijites. The authors of Kanz, Hidaaya and Aalimgiri are merely conveyers. Their crime is only that they conveyed the Masaa`il in their books. These Masaa`il are not theirs, but were formulated by the Imams (Imaam Abu Hanifah, Imaam Abu Yusuf, Imaam Muhammed - rahmatullahi alaihim) and according to Maududi these personalities are "leaders of the kuffaar" who are liable for double punishment and regarding whom the Qur`aan has warned of severe punishment for them. Why does he harbour such hatred and spit so much venom for these pious personalities? Simply because he cannot find any reference in these writings of the Aimmah which conforms to his own understandings. Let us be fair, can the intellect allow such defilement, for which there is no substantiation or reason?

I have mentioned before that in these precarious times of predominance of ignorance the only salvation is to follow the pious predecessors and hold on firmly to them. Without this support no person's Imaan can be safe merely on the knowledge that is available today. If one does not refer to or rely upon the predecessors, then shaitaan will capitalise on this situation and easily lead astray. He will make one person a Parwez, another Chakraalwi and another Ghulaam Ahmad Qadiani. It is most unfortunate that Maududi regards the emulation of the elders as the most serious crime. He mocks it by branding it "mental slavery". Take note of his words:

"In my opinion it is not permissible for a learned person to make Taqleed, it is a sin, in fact worse. But remember, to follow the principle of a certain school of thought according to ones own research is completely different from Taqleed. It is the latter which I regard as incorrect."

This is Maududi's personal opinion. The basis of this incorrect opinion is that he regards every literate person as learned, and grants every learned person the status of a Mujtahid. Both these assumptions are incorrect. Had he considered for a while, he would have realized how lofty is the status of Ijtihaad. It is for this very reason that from after the fourth century until Mujaddid Alfe Thaani and Shah Abdul Azeez, the whole Ummat was unanimous on the matter of Taqleed. Were not all these elders learned according to Maududi? Did they follow the Imaams and in the words of Maududi thus committed *"a sin, in fact worse"*?

It is an irrefutable fact that Maududi does not trust anyone from amongst the elders, including the Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum). Hence he also expresses a feeling of distrust in the knowledge which has been conveyed to us via them.

After Fiqh another important aspect of Deen exists viz. Tasawwuf, which could be regarded as the very spirit of Deen and it has been called Ihsaan in the Hadith of Hadhrat Jibraeel (alaihi salaam).

Three responsibilities or aims of Rasulullaah's (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) duty have been explicitly mentioned in the Qur`aan:

(1) Recitation of the Qur`aanic verses.
(2) Educating by means of the Qur`aan and Hadith.
(3) Spiritual Purification.

All three obligatory acts are of paramount importance, but there exists a sequence regarding their accomplishment. Consequently recitation of the verses is an introduction to education, which in turn is a prologue to purification. Thus the work of prophethood is initiated at the recital of the verses and concludes at spiritual purification. Hence Tazkiyah-e-Naffs (spiritual purification) is the ultimate aim of prophethood. It can be conceived as the building of character or the making of a person.

Undoubtedly recitation of the verses is an important aim, and the teaching of the Qur`aan and Hadith is a most lofty stage, but both these aspects, although being important individually are pre-requisites for spiritual purification. Perhaps that is why the Qur`aan mentions these three aspects by beginning with recitation and concluding with Tazkiyah, to emphasize the sequence of importance. In another verse of the Qur`aan, Tazkiyah is mentioned first, then recital of the verses and then education. This is an indication that Tazkiyah is the first and final aim. And Allaah Knows Best.

Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) was responsible for all three obligations at one time. He used to recite the words of the Qur`aan to the Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum), teach them its meaning, implications and laws and he used to and reform them spiritually as well. Subsequent to his demise when the Ummat inherited the responsibility of this obligation, work was done separately on each faculty. Even though such personalities who embodied all three aspects did exist, generally an independent group handled the faculty of recitation, separate individuals took on the responsibility of handling the different faculties of education and one group involved itself

in discipline and reformation. Those elders who sacrificed themselves for this third field became known as Sufis and Peers and their faculty was called "Sulook" and "Tasawwuf'. From this brief clarification it can be deduced that Tasawwuf is by no means a separate entity from Shariah and neither are the Sufis an obsolete creation of another planet.

They are in reality the servants and upholders of this noble faculty handed down by Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). This faculty is of such importance that the aims of prophethood cannot be completed nor can this Ummat fulfil its obligations without it. The Sufis should most deservedly receive our gratitude for having upheld this delicate obligation. They fulfilled their duty of reformation with extreme silence and solitude. Had this not been the case, this Ummat would have been deprived of this most important faculty and it would have consisted of a flock of ignorant persons.

If it could be said that the Ummat requires brave soldiers on the battlefield, experienced teachers in the educational institutions, just judges in the courts of law, researchers in the field of science and technology and similarly specialists in all fields, then definitely the Ummat also requires the services of people who can reform human beings. The human reformation centres are the Khaanqah and these spiritual reformers therein are the Sufis. It is indeed a great tragedy that in our environment a man only sees the need for material commodities but he fails to realize the importance of having true qualities of a human being.
Consequently the common minds regard the Sufis and their Khaanqah as obsolete. Maududi himself has also been affected by the environment and consequently has become dissatisfied with the Sufis. He mocks Tasawwuf in a manner unworthy of a learned person. He believes that if a person reads the Qur`aan and Hadith, he can reform himself without sitting at the feet of any teacher. Had the mere learning of the Qur`aanic words constituted knowledge, Imaam Ghazaali would not have left Nizamia University and recalled his experiences in his book "*Al Munqiz minad Dalal*'. Had mere knowing been knowledge, the Orientalists would have been more entitled than Maududi to be labelled a learned man.
Maududi regarded the whole Ummat as unworthy and as a result he had to rely solely on his knowledge and interpretation to understand Deen.
He writes:

"I am not in need of any Aalim, small or big, to understand my Deen, for I can always consult the Qur`aan and Hadith to understand the principles. I am also able to determine whether the learned people of this country have adopted the correct or incorrect school of thought concerning a particular Mas`alah. Accordingly, I am obligated to proclaim whatever I find in the Qur`aan and Sunnah as true, as the actual truth." [Roadaad Jamaat Islaami, page 43]

"I have always endeavoured to understand Deen from the Qur`aan and Sunnah instead of relying on past or present personalities. Therefore, in order to recognise what the Deen of Allaah requires of me, I have never deemed it necessary to observe what a certain buzrug (saint) says and does. On the contrary, I have always attempted to see what the Qur`aan and Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) say." [Ibid, part 3, page 102]

Trying to understand the Deen without the means of the predecessors is the root of all corruption that prevails today. We are expected to believe that they are learning Deen from the Qur`aan and Sunnah, but on the contrary, by making one's own interpretation of the standard for judging the truth and disassociating from the predecessors, the people create their own standards for judging the truth and deviate from the reality of truth found in the Qur`aan and Hadith e.g. Mr. Ghulaam Ahmad Parwez claims that all his ideologies are based solely on the Qur`aan and Sunnah (Parwez does not believe in the Hadith but claims to practise on the Sunnah). The Qadianis also claim to follow the Book of Allaah and his Messenger, whilst Maududi makes the same claim. All three groups claim to have their sources in the Qur`aan and Sunnah, but the question remains as to whether whatever is presented to us is in fact correct or incorrect? What standard do we use for judging this? On what basis can we ascertain that Mr. Parwez and the Qadiyanis are false and Maududi is correct. The standard lies in recognizing the interpretation of

understanding the predecessors i.e. whatever the pious predecessors have understood of the Qur`aan and Hadith is in fact correct, and whatever contradicts that is wrong. Contrary to this Parwez, Qadiani and Maududi reject this standard and regard whatever they understand from the Qur`aan as Deen.

This is the point on which I differ with Maududi. In my opinion, the standard of truth is the understanding which the Sahaabah had of the Qur`aan and Sunnah and which was passed on from generation to generation. According to Maududi to make a connection between the past and present is erroneous, hence according to him, his intelligence is the determining factor of the truth, which he has attained via the Qur`aan and Sunnah.

By depending on his personal knowledge and opinion Maududi's understanding of Deen has become completely different from that of the pious predecessors. According to him, Deen is a political movement established on earth to introduce the Law of Allaah. He writes:

"In the Islaamic movement, Muhammad (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) is the one leader in whose life we find all the details of each stage, from the initial dawah till the establishment of an Islaamic state, and subsequently till the formation and charter of the state. During this period, the leader of this movement displayed its principles and requirements. ***But the leader which Allaah appointed for guidance paid no attention to any problems of the world, nor of his own country.*** *However he invited towards the discarding of all deities and the worship of One."* [Islaami Hukumat kis Tarah Qaaim hoti he, page23/4]

To portray Islaam as a political movement and assign the prophets as the leaders of this movement defaces the entire soul of Deen. Consider the Hadith of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) which every person knows that states Islaam is based on five principles; Kalimah Shahaadat, establishment of Salaat, paying of Zakaat, perform Hajj, fasting in Ramadhaan.
These are the five fundamentals of Deen upon which the whole system of Deen functions, such that even if Jihad is undertaken it is for the establishment of these five pillars, Hijrah is for their sake and politics also is only for these five fundamentals. All the remaining actions of Deen emanate from these five. Thus these five pillars are so honoured that no other deed can match them in status, but according to Maududi the fundamental principle of Deen is an Islaamic state, and the whole system of Deen, -- beliefs, worship, character, social relations, dealings and even these five pillars rotate around this principle. In short, Deen is a revealed political movement and all other aspects are a means of training.

Maududi writes:

"Firstly, remember well that Deen is not merely a deluge of scattered thoughts and actions, collected from here and there. It is a proper system based on a few solid basic principles. All its major fundamentals and minor aspects are logically connected to the basic principles. Concerning the different faculties of a human's life, the essence of the rules which have been specified, are derived from the basic principles. The entire Islaamic life with all its diverse branches is established just as in a tree, where the roots appear from the seed, the stem from the roots, the branches from the stem and the leaves from the branches. Even after spreading thoroughly, each leaf is ultimately connected to the root. Consequently whichever faculty of Islaam you wish to understand, you will inevitably have to refer to its roots, without which you cannot achieve its essence." [Islaami Riyaasat, page 20/1]

Moulana writes defining the essence of Deen:

"The essence of the system of life which the Ambiyaa have categorized constitutes this very belief and the Islaamic political theory is also based on it. The foundation of Islaamic politics stipulates that all authority in formulating laws and giving commands be snatched away from any individuals and parties. No one should have the right to give a command and force another to obey it. This power lies with Allaah Ta`ala alone." [Ibid. Page 34]

According to Maududi, establishing political control is actual worship whilst Salaat, fasting etc. are merely modes of military training. He writes:

"This is the reality of that worship which people regard as merely Salaat, fasting and Thikr, and which they believe have no relationship with worldly matters whereas in reality Salaat, fasting, Zakaat, Hajj and Thikr are exercises to prepare one for the main act of worship." [Tafheemaat, page 56, edition 4]

It is important to realise that Islaam has different faculties which can be divided into the following major categories viz, belief, worship, character, social affairs, dealings, and politics. Undoubtedly politics also constitutes a portion of Deen. However to regard the whole of Deen as a political movement and all the acts of worship as secondary factors is such a serious misconception that I am forced to label it in very soft terms "ideological perverseness". All the acts of worship which Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) attached the most importance to, mentioned countless of their virtues and gave glad tidings of paradise to those who uphold them, have not only been assigned secondary importance by Maududi, but he mocks them in such a manner that causes the true spirit of Imaan to quiver. Consider the following.

"The elite have contrary to this, chosen another road. They have taken their Tasbeehs (rosaries) and retired to their rooms, while the servants of Allaah are being misguided. Oppression is permeating the world. The darkness of falsehood is encompassing the radiance of truth. Oppressors and insurgents are controlling the land of Allaah. Instead of the laws of Allaah, satanic laws are being promulgated while these people are performing Nafl after Nafl and rotating the beads of their rosaries. They are shouting the slogans of "He is the Truth". They are reciting the Qur`aan purely to earn reward and the Hadith merely as a blessing. They lecture on the life of Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) and the Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum) merely to enjoy the tales. They do not recognize the command of inviting towards good, enjoining the right, forbidding the wrong, engaging in Jihad, reciting the Qur`aan, Hadith and the history of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) and the Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum). Is this Ibaadat?" [Tafheemaat, page 59, edition 4]

At this juncture I will not discuss Maududi's accusation of the Ulama being negligent in enjoining good, forbidding evil and Jihad in Allaah Ta`ala's path. I will also not delve into the discussion of the false and incorrect literature which Maududi and his followers have been producing, attempting only to equip the youth with a few slogans. I will also leave aside the fact that when the Ulama were unrelentingly engaged in Jihad against the British, Maududi and his followers were busy building castles in the air of a divine government. Not only were they deprived of setting foot on the battlefield, but in fact they issued verdicts against the mujahideen. I will not mention all those things here. I only wish to ask him this that in a manner of distribution, some servants of Allaah engage in Thikr, some in the recitation of the Qur`aan Majeed, some protect Deeni knowledge and some involve themselves in dua for the Ummah, do these people and their noble actions deserve to be disgraced, because they are not emerging onto the streets and shouting vociferous slogans of *"Islaamic System"*? I wish to know whether in your opinion Tasbeeh, Nafl, Tilaawat of Qur`aan, learning and teaching Hadith, lectures on the Noble Nabi (sallAllaahu alahi wasallam) and his companions, etc are so futile that they be mocked at? Has anyone ever poked fun at you after reading your *"Tarjumaanul Qur`aan"*? Is not the Tilaawat of the Qur`aan more virtuous than reading your Kitaab? The decisions of the jurists regarding a person who mocks Deen are very explicit. Such statements can only emerge from a person whose heart is devoid of Imaan and the radiance of respect for Ibaadat.

Moulana Maududi states in his book *"Tajdeed Wa Ahyaa-e-Deen"*, regarding Imaam Mahdi (alaihi salaam):

"Those Muslims who believe in Imaam Mahdi are not very far behind in their misconception from those revivalists who do not believe in him. They think that Imaam Mahdi will be some kind of future molvi or sufi who will suddenly emerge from a certain Madrasah or khanqa with a tasbeeh in his hand. Upon arrival he will announce "I am Mahdi". The Ulama and Mashaaikh will proceed to him with books in hand and recognize him by comparing the written signs with his external features. Then the pledge will occur and the announcement of Jihad will be

proclaimed. The forty day sages and the old-fashioned predecessors will gather under his flag. They will use their swords as a mere formality to fulfil the conditions of Jihad. The actual work will be performed by blessings and spiritual powers. They will be victorious due to incantations and wazifas. On whichever kafir their sight falls, he will fall unconscious. By mere dua, tanks and aircraft will be infested with worms." (Page 55)

I cannot believe that such disparaging fairy tales can emanate from the pen of an Aalim. Maududi's hatred for the pious servants of Allaah has driven him to mock and humiliate them. Does he claim that any victory can be achieved without any Barakah (blessings)? Just as he has mocked Imaam Mahdi, how will Maududi react to someone who mocks Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) in a similar manner (*Nauthubillaah)*? Is he denying the Mu`jizaat of the Ambiyaa (alaihi salaam) and Karaamaat of the Auliyaa? Did the battle of Badr, which was won by two horses, eight swords and three hundred and thirteen dedicated soldiers against a well-equipped army lack in blessings? On the occasion of Badr Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) spent the entire night supplicating to Allaah Ta`ala. He made the following dua: ***"O Allaah! If you annihilate this little group (of Sahaabah) there will be none to worship You after this day."*** Did the Assistance of Allaah Ta`ala descend without Barkat (blessings)?

On the occasion when Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) cast the sand rearding which Allaah Ta`ala says in the Qur`aan Majeed: ***"And you did not thorw when you threw, indeed it was Allaah who threw."*** In Moulana's estimation was this not Barkat? When Moulana Maududi can poke fun and jest at the coming of Imaam Mahdi (alaihi salaam) it is not far-fetched for an atheist to go one step further and mock at the Battle of Badr.

Moulana Maududi goes on to say this about Imaam Mahdi:

"My estimate is that the person will be a modern leader of the times. He will have a deep insight into all the prevailing sciences of the day. He will possess a proper understanding of all the important daily laws. He will have complete authority in mental leadership, political strategy and wartime expertise. He will be so much more modern than the others that I fear the molvis and sufis will be first to raise a hue and cry." (page 55)

Are the statements of Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) not sufficient regarding Imaam Mahdi that Maududi has to conjure up his own predictions concerning a personality that is to appear in the future? Predictions are either formulated by means of divine inspiration, correct intuition or by stronomers who combine fact with fiction. What is Maududi's "estimation" of Imaam Mahdi based upon?

Disregarding Maududi's fear of the molvis and Imaam Mahdi's modernism, I wish to ask him what quality he (Maududi) lacks from amongst the qualities he has assigned to Mahdi? He possesses all the above-mentioned qualities but yet his movement has not progressed. Let alone the entire world, he has not even been able to forge his authority on Pakistan. Leave aside Pakistan, he has failed to create an Islaamic government even in his own village. Imaam Mahdi, according to Maududi will not be superhuman. Hence if all blessings, Thikr, dua, tasbeeh and the musAllaah are taken away from him, will he be able to forge his authority with all his modernism? Has Maududi pondered over these issues when making his predictions. In reality, Maududi wanted only to mock the saints, their khanqas and their blessings in the shadow of Imaam Mahdi. In fact he falls short in his own logical deductions.

(8). The origin of the Islaamic Shariah is derived from four important factors which are known as the four principles. They are the Qur`aan. the Hadith-e-Nabawi, consensus of opinion (Ijma)and deductions of the Mujtahideen (Qiyaas). The fact that Maududi distances himself from the predecessors and deduces his own understanding of the four principles is indeed shocking. Regarding the Qur`aan he claims that its teachings were gradually distorted and forgotten, and after the period of revelation it became meaningless (*Nauthubillaah*). He writes in his book *"Qur`aan Ki Chaar Bunyaadi Istikaahe"* that the four words *Ilaah* (Allaah), *Rabb* (Sustainer), *Deen* (religion) and *Ibaadat* (worship) have a basic importance in Qur`aanic terminology. The reason for their importance according to him is:

"It is absolutely essential to understand these four terms correctly in order to comprehend the Qur`aanic teachings. If a person cannot understand the meaning of Ilaah or Rabb, or what is Ibaadat and what the definition of Deen is, then in reality the entire Qur`aan becomes meaningless for him. He will be unable to distinguish between unity and shirk (polytheism). He will not be able to worship Allaah alone, nor will he be able to establish Deen purely for Allaah's sake. Similarly, if a person fails to understand these terms correctly, the entire Qur`aanic teachings will be unclear for him, and notwithstanding his faith in the Qur`aan, his belief and action will both be incomplete." (pages 9-10)

In short Maududi states that if a person does not understand these four terms correctly, *"Then in reality the whole Qur`aan becomes meaningless for him."* Thereafter he informs us that when the Qur`aan was revealed to the Arabs, every person understood the correct meanings of these words.

Not only the Muslims, but even the disbelievers knew their meanings.....But

"But in the later centuries their meanings as known at the time of revelation, gradually began changing until they became restricted, in fact vague. The lack of enthusiasm for Arabic was one of the reasons for this situation. The second reason was that the words Ilaah, Rabb, Ibaadat and Deen did not take on the same meaning for the Muslims as they did for the kaafir society at the time of revelation. Due to these two reasons the dictionaries and books of Tafseer, instead of explaining the original meanings of the Qur`aanic words, began assigning explanations which the latter Muslims could understand." (Ibid. Page12)

And what was the result of neglecting and being ignorant of these four basic terms?

"The reality is that because a veil was thrown over these four basic terms, more than three quarters of the Qur`aanic teachings, in fact its actual essence became concealed." (Ibid. Page14)

It is entirely probable that Maududi's followers may regard these statements of his a worthy interpretation of events, but I have no choice but to call it an insult to the Qur`aan and the Muslims. The clear interpretation of his words is that during the period of revelation even the non-Muslims understood the true meaning of the Qur`aan but all the later generations were ignorant of the essence of these four terms and thus the Qur`aan was read as a meaningless book. Allaah forbid, had Maududi not stepped into this world and opened the knot of these four Qur`aanic terms, no person would have understood Allaah's Word.

This view of Maududi's does not merely regard the whole Ummah as misguided and astray, but is an expression of the total loss of understanding regarding the Qur`aan, which shakes the very foundations of the Ummah's faith in the Qur`aan. Can the very final book of Allaah be envisaged as having lost its teachings and spirit after such a brief period. If I did not have respect for Maududi, I would have branded his interpretations as being the result of pure ignorance, nay insanity.

The Qur`aanic teachings will shine till the Day of Qiyaamah. Thousands of rotations of the earth and millions of revolutions were unsuccessful in distorting them. Accordingly his ideology is absolutely nonsensical. There are three basic causes for his wayward thinking.

Firstly, he has not pondered over the fact that Allaah has taken the responsibility of safeguarding the Qur`aan. Allaah Ta`ala states: ***"We have revealed the "Thikr" and We will protect it."***

Not only is this a reference to the words and forms, but also the meaning, message, teachings and in fact all the means which are essential in safeguarding the scriptures. Hence to propose that this Kitaab became meaningless is in fact tantamount to rejecting the protection of the Qur`aan as proclaimed by Allaah Ta`ala.

Secondly, Maududi did not ponder the fact that the finality of the prophethood of Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu alaihi wasalam) requires the Deen to be intact till Qiyaamah without interruption. If for only one moment any teaching of Rasulullaah (sallalahu alaihi wasallam) is taken away, such a gap will appear between Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) and the Ummah that can never be restored and a shadow of doubt will prevail over every part of Deen. But Maududi advocates that after a short period, more than three quarters of the Qur`aanic teachings were lost. This viewpoint indirectly represents a rejection of Rasulullaah's (sallalahu alaihi wasallam) finality and the permanence of true Deen.

Thirdly, Maududi did not realize that the viewpoint he has presented in such flowery language is the very same stance which the irreligious people have adopted since ancient times to distort Deen. Rejection of the Qur`aan is based on three principles:

I. To reject the words of the Qu`aran as being revealed from Allaah,

II. To recognize the Qur`aanic words as originating from Allaah but simultaneously saying that Rasulullaah (sallalahu alaihi wasallam) and the Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum) did not understand the correct meaning, but we have understood it.

III. To claim that the meaning of the Qur`aan which Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) and the Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum) understood was not preserved in the later centuries. Hence the meaning of the Qur`aan in the form of Hadith and Tafseer, which the whole Ummah regards as correct, is not the actual message of the Qur`aan. The original meaning is the one we have presented.

The first two forms of rejecting the Qur`aan are so blatant that even the most irreligious person will not dare to bear this burden in an Islaamic society by boldly rejecting the Qur`aan or openly stating that he does not believe in the Qur`aanic meanings as portrayed by Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) and the Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum). Accordingly all irreligious people choose the third method and state that the molvis have distorted the meaning of the Qur`aan. Just as a thief using the darkness as a camouflage holds the hand of the owner of a house and shouts *"Thief, thief!"* in order to cause the people to assault him while making good his escape, similarly these heretics have blamed the elders for changing the Qur`aanic meanings, thereby unleashing an onslaught on them while they sit innocently. To understand this, consider the example of Mr. Ghulaam Ahmad Parwez and Qadiani. According to them, wherever the word obedience to Allaah and his Rasool is mentioned in the Qur`aan, it refers to obedience of the central authority. The meaning of Allaah and his Rasool which the "mullahs" have understood is the product of a foreign mind (*Nauthubillah*).

The Qadiyanis claim that the molvis have not understood the true meaning of the "Seal of Prophets". The term according to them is not a reference to the termination of prophethood, but is a term meaning the continuation of the prophet's seal.

Furthermore the Aayat: ***"Allaah raised him unto Himself"*** does not refer to the physical raising of Hadhrat Isaa (alaihi salaam), but it means a death of honour. When the statement of Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), the Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum) and the Imaams are presented before these misguided groups, their answer is that these are writings of people of later generations. In reality they wish to reject the Qur`aan but do not have the courage to do so openly. Hence they present the argument that the meanings have been altered by people of later ages. This is the same path which Maududi has tread on. Furthermore he has the audacity to blame the Imaams of Arabic for lacking in their knowledge when in reality they were "walking encyclopaedias" who knew all the different meanings of a word and its usage without resorting to dictionaries. They all had such knowledge preserved in their memories, yet they are being accused of not understanding the correct meaning of Qur`aanic words and the Qur`aan Majeed remained meaningless for them *Laa Howla Wa Laa Quwwata Illa Billaah.*

(9). After the Qur`aan, the Hadith is the most important source of Islaamic knowledge. Maududi's opinion regarding the Hadith is also very vague. Briefly, I will mention a few points.

Firstly, according to the Ulama, Hadith and Sunnat are synonymous, but Mr. Ghlaam Ahmad Parwez, Dr.Fazlur Rahman and others have differentiated between the two. Maududi has also adopted the same belief but fails to clarify the difference. [Refer to *Rasaail Wa Masaa`il, page 310 part 1]*

Secondly, he claims to be an authority on the Messenger. Hence he makes his own decision regarding the authenticity of a Hadith. He writes:

"If Allaah endows a person with understanding concerning the Deen, then by deeply studying the Qur`aan and Hadith a special fervour is created in him like an experienced jeweller who can perceive the most delicate subtleties in a gemstone. His sight falls on the system of Shariah as a whole and he can thus recognize the operation of the system. Thereafter when minor issues are presented to him, he is able to determine which one conforms to the Islaamic nature and which one does not. When he studies the narrations of Hadith, this natural instinct becomes a standard for his accepting or rejecting a particular narration. The nature of Islaam manifests itself perfectly in the nature of Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). Whoever understands the nature of Islaam and has studied the Qur`aan and Hadith in depth becomes acquainted with the nature of

Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu alaihi wasalam). By merely looking at a narration his insight guides him in determining which statement is in fact that of Rasulullaah (sallalahu alaihi wasalam) and which one is the closest to the Sunnah. Furthermore, if he is unable to find anything in the Qur`aan and Sunnah on a particular issue, he will be qualified to issue a verdict as Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) would have. This ability of his stems from his spirit becoming lost in the spirit of Muhammad (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) and his insight becoming united with the insight of Nabi (sallalahu alaihi wasallam).His mind becomes Islaamically moulded and he begins to perceive and think as Islaam wishes him to.

Upon reaching this stage a person no longer really requires a sanad (chain of narrators). He does however, use the sanad but his decision is not based on it. Sometimes he accepts a weak Hadith because he perceives a valuable jewel in the stone, and at times he disregards an authentic Hadith because it contradicts the Islaamic nature and the spirit of Nubuwwat." [Tafheemaat, page 296/7]

Thirdly, the practices of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) have been divided by the Ulama into two categories viz. *Sunnan-e-Huda (*those aspects relating to Deen which are essential to follow) and *Sunnan-e-A`diya* (personal habits which do not constitute a Shar`i command), although these acts are not compulsory to follow, taking heed of them is indeed a means of great fortune. If we find ourselves unable to imitate Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) we should realize that the reason is not because his lifestyle is unworthy of following, but it is due to the deficiency of our capabilities.

Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) is the beloved leader of the Ummah. Every act of the beloved is beneficial. Hence to adopt his way is a declaration of true love. Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) is the embodiment of all virtue, having been protected from all evil by Allaah. Consequently imitating his example can be regarded as a means of achieving great virtue and a protection from evil. Imaam Ghazaali states:

"Actual good fortune lies in following Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) in every movement. Accordingly all actions are of two types; firstly, worship such as Salaah, fasting, Hajj, Zakaat, etc. Secondly, habits like eating, drinking, sleeping etc. It is essential for Muslims to follow Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) in both types of acts...." [Tableegh-e-Deen, page 39]

Subsequently to deriving the Shar`i and logical proofs for following the Sunnah in general habits, Imaam Ghazaali states:

"Whatever we have mentioned was for encouraging the adoption of the Sunnah in general habits. Concerning those acts connected to worship, and whose rewards have been mentioned abundantly, the disregarding of such acts without a valid excuse can be due only to hidden disbelief or open stupidity." [Page 42]

Contrary to this, Maududi has mocked the Sunnah of our Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). He states that most pious people have the misconception that regarding the following of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasalam) and the Salf-e-Saaliheen is as follows:

"Just like the clothes they wore, we must wear, we must eat the type of food they ate, just as they conducted themselves in their personal lives we must imitate them precisely in the same way."

According to Moulana this type of imitation is incorrect, the correct way is:

"This method of following which has been thrust upon the minds of religious Muslims for centuries is in reality completely contrary to the spirit of Islaam. Islaam never taught us to be living replicas of the past, nor to stage a drama of ancient civilization." [Tafheemaat, page 209/210]

Undoubtedly to benefit from the technologies of modern times is not sinful. By remaining within lslaamic limits, it is permissible to adopt new ways of conducting our social relations. But to express the dress and manners of our beloved Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) in such despicable words as *"ancient relics"* and *"a drama of ancient civilization"* is not only contrary to the expression of love, but is also removed from the necessities of showing honour to the noble.

This Philosophy of Maududi is also unique:

"Islaam does not give us a form, Instead it gives us a spirit. Due to changes in time and place, all the different forms which will be created till Qiyaamah, should be filled with the very same spirit."

In other words, according to Maududi, the Islaamic form is unnecessary. He could create any form he chooses, but by filling it with an Islaamic spirit he could make it acceptable to Islaam. I fail to see in which factory this Islaamic spirit is made. Based on this logic, Maududi has also created two categories of the cinema - Islaamic and un-Islaamic.

If the lslaamic spirit is blown into the cinema, it becomes Islaamic. This is the understanding of Islaam and the value of the Sunnah in his view.

Fourthly, because he only believes in the Islaamic spirit, the Islaamic form is an innovation in his opinion. According to this philosophy, Rasulullaah's (sallAllaahu alaihi wasllam) external Sunnah becomes a Bid`ah (innovation). He writes:

*"I regard the terms 'uswah' (example), Sunnah, Bid`ah (innovation) etc. as misunderstood, in fact they are distortions of Deen. Your belief of maintaining a long beard like Rasulullaah's (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) means that you regard it as a Sunnah which the Messengers came to establish. I not only regard this definition of Sunnah as incorrect, but I perceive this to be a form of Bid`ah and a form of changing the Deen, having disastrous consequences in the past and in the future as well."* [Rasaail Wa Masaa`il page 307]

Maududi has committed two errors here. One is that he has rejected the keeping of beard as Sunnah, by naming it a habit, whereas Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) has proclaimed it an unanimous Sunnah of all Messengers. The Ummah has been given clear instructions to follow it. That is, to oppose the way of the kuffaar. Hence to regard it as a *Sunnan-e-Adiyah* (habit) and to aver that to refer to it as a Sunnat of the Deen is audacious.

The second mistake made by Maududi is that he avers Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) has commanded the lengthening of the beard, but he did not specify any length. Hence according to him the beard has no prescribed length, whereas this is incorrect because Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) has commanded the lengthening of the beard but never gave a command of clipping it. Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) permitted the Sahaabah to maintain the beard at a length of one fist. If a shorter beard had been permissible he would have allowed it.

Consequently none of the jurists have permitted clipping the beard shorter than one-fist length. Maududi not only rejects this unanimous Sunnah, but mocks it by calling it a distortion. Can a person who is so daring regarding the rejection of the Sunnah be worthy of being given the status of an Aalim?

Fifthly, the Sunnah of the Khulafaa-e-Raashideen is also a part of Sunnat-e-Nabawi. The decisions of the Khulafaa-e-Rashideen which were unanimously accepted by all the Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum) were based on a consensus of opinion among the Sahaabah.

Shah Waliullah Muhaddithy Dehlwi (rahmatullahi alaih) states:

"The word Ijma which you may have heard from the Ulama does not mean that all the mujtahiddeen of a particular age, without any exceptions, agree unanimously on a particular issue because this has not occurred and is impossible. It means that the Khulafaa adopted a resolution either by consulting the Sahaabah, or not, and which was enforced until it became a common and accepted practice. Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) said: ***'Hold on firmly to my Sunnah and the Sunnah of my Khulafaa).'"***

Contrary to the statement of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) Maududi states:

"The decisions of the Khulafaa which they enforced as judges did not become law in Islaam."

From these theories of Maududi concerning the basic sources of Shariah viz, the Qur`aan, Hadith and the Sunnah of the Khulafaa, one can gauge how distorted his views are. Regarding Ijtihaad he does not consider anyone besides himself capable of it. Accordingly his understanding of Deen is primarily based on his own reasoning and Ijtihaad. Maududi's outlook on Deen can be deduced from these few factors, otherwise as mentioned previously, the list of his misinterpretations is extensive. It is my opinion that Maududi cannot be counted as amongst the Salf-e-Saaliheen. He has regarded as Haqq whatever his limited understanding has fathomed to be. The deficiency in his thinking can be attributed to the following factors:

(1). He did not study Deen by anyone, but tried to understand it by himself. He is of the opinion that everyone can understand Deen by personal study.

(2). During his youth, the company of atheists and modernists had a tremendous effect on his personality. Maududi explains this himself:

"The experience of one and a half years taught me that it is essential to stand on one's own feet in order to lead a life. There is no other method except to endeavour towards economic independence. Nature endowed me with the quality of penmanship. This ability improved by general studies. At that time I began associating with Niaz Fatehpuri whose companionship also became a consequential factor in my life. All these factors caused me to make my pen the means of earning a livelihood."
[Moulana Maududi, page 72]

(3). Allaah Ta`ala granted him excellent capabilities, but unfortunately he began to consider himself so lofty that all the pious predecessors seemed inadequate in his age. He began perceiving himself as being granted such an understanding of Deen which no person was ever granted. This elation resulted in his relying on personal opinions and founded his pride.

(4) He was overawed by modernism to such an extent that he found it difficult to present Deen in its original form. Consequently he modified the Deen to conform to modernism, regardless of the changes that would occur. Just like how nowadays, a concerted effort is made in certain quarters to 'conform' the Deen to suit the majority.

(5) Together with all this, the power of his pen induced him to cross the boundaries of respect for the elders. As a result, the evil influence of this disrespect predominated his writings. If only an intelligent and prospective person like Moulana Maududi had been nurtured and developed in the correct channels, he would have been an asset and a source of pride to Islaam.

ANSWER TO QUESTION NUMBER TWO

You have mentioned regarding the Khateeb Saheb (Imaam) who does not perform the Sunnats after the Fardh of Jumuah. It is a common trait amongst the Arabs that they attach scant importance to Sunnats and Nafls. In this regard I wish to present a few points:

Firstly, Allaah Ta`ala has ordained the Nawaafil as an expiation for the deficiencies in the Faraaidh. This is the reason why the Shariah has placed much stress on Nawaafil and Sunnan, and the Ahaadith has expounded on its virtues. It is reported in one Hadith that the person who regularly performs twelve Rakaats daily, besides his Fardh Salaat, then Allaah Ta`ala will grant him a palace in Jannat; (the 12 rakaats are) four before Zuhr, and two after, two after Maghrib, two after Esha and two before Fajr Salaat. [Mishkaat, page 103]

Secondly, regarding Sunnan and Nawaafil, people are generally divided into two categories as far as lethargy in performing them are concerned. One is found in the learned and the other in the unlearned. The error on the art of the unlearned is that they do not differentiate between Fardh and Nafl. They regard Nafl to be just as Fardh, whereas there is a difference between them of the heavens and the earth. To understand this, take the example of a person who performs Nafl Salaat the entire day, but he does not perform his Fardh Salaat, then in the Sight

of Allaah Ta`ala, he is regarded as a sinner. On the other hand if a person only performs his Fardh Salaat and not his Nawaafil, then he will not be regarded as a sinner, rather he will be regarded as being deprived.

A person who keeps fast for the entire year, but he purposely omits one fast of Ramdhaan, will be regarded as a sinner. If a person fasts the full month of Ramadhaan but does not keep any fast during the year, will be regarded as being deprived, but he will not be a sinner.

Or, alternatively, the person who remains awake the entire night performing Nafl Salaat, but he misses the Fajr Salaat with Jamaat, will be a sinner, because it is Waajib to perform Fardh Salaat with Jamaat. On the other hand a person who sleeps the entire night, but he is punctual for his Fajr Salaat with Jamaat, will not be regarded as a sinner.

In short, a person who omits Fardh is a sinner, one who omits Sunnat-e-Muakkadah is liable for rebuke and censure, and one who omits Nawaafil is deprived of goodness and blessings, but he is not liable for censure.

The poor masses are blissfully ignorant of the differences between Fardh, Waajib, Sunnat and Mustahab. This is the reason why they do not view the person who misses a Fardh with disdain, but they regard with contempt the one who omits a Sunnat or Mustahab. The fault of the learned is that they attach virtually no importance to Nawaafil and Sunnan, and are deprived of performing them dutifully. They understand that this (Nawaafil) is not Fardh, and therefore they are extremely lax in its performance, whereas this is also a duty upon them. The affection and proximity one has with Allaah Ta`ala is borne out by their performance of these optional Ibaadaat.

Thirdly, the narrations regarding the Sunnats after Jumuah Salaat vary. It is reported in one Hadith that the Sunnats to be performed after Jumuah are four. [Muslim / Mshkaat page 104].
In another narration it is reported that Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) used to go to his room after the Jumuah Salaat and perform two Rakaats. It is reported from Hadhrat Abdullaah Ibn Mas`ood (radhiAllaahu anhu) that he used to perform four Rakaats before and four after the Jumuah Salaat. Hadhrat Ali (radhiAllaahu anhu) ordered that six Rakaats be read after the Jumuah Salaat. Hadhrat Abdullaah Ibn Umar (radhiAllaahu anhu) [who reported that Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) used to go to his room after Jumuah and perform two Rakaats], himself used to perform first two Rakaats and thereafter four after the Jumuah. [Tirmidhi Shareef]

Fourthly, three possibilities present themselves from the above-mentioned narrations. Firstly, two Rakaats – this is the ruling of Imaam Shaafi (rahmatullahi alaih). Secondly, four Rakaats – this is the ruling of Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullahi alaih), thirdly six Rakaats – this is the ruling of Imaams Abu Yusuf and Muhammed (rahmatullahi alaihima). The final ruling of the Hanafi Math-hab is on this (latter) view. Nevertheless, there is a choice of whether to first perform four Rakaats or two. Since the Arabs are mostly followers of the Shaafi and Hambali Math-habs, they will follow the rulings of their respective Imaams. For them there are fewer Sunnats and Nafls on this occasion. Nevertheless, we Hanafis have to perform six Rakaats after the Jumuah Salaat. Even though our Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) loved and desired a certain action, he did not perform it very punctually and often for fear that it would become binding upon the Ummat.

ANSWER TO QUESTION NUMBER THREE

In your third question you enquired regarding the Shar`i status of *Faatihah, Isaal-e-Thawaab, Gyaarwi Shareef,* and *Khatam Shareef.* The question regarding the recital of *Faatihah* at the graveside has been dealt with in the previous pages. I will hereunder deal with other issues

ISAAL-E-THAWAAB

(1). The reality of *Isaal-e-Thawaab* is that whatever good deed you do, and it is accepted by Allaah Ta`ala, then you make an intention or a dua that Allaah Ta`ala bestow the reward thereof to some living or dead person. After understanding this definition of *Isaal-e-Thawaab*, you should know the following three Mas`alahs:

1. The deed which you carry out must be such that you have hope that it can earn you reward. Otherwise, if you cannot get any reward for it then how can you convey the reward to another person? Hence, that action which is contrary to the Shariah or Sunnah, will be deprived of any reward. To expect to convey reward with such an action is having high hopes.

2. *Isaal-e-Thawaab* can be conveyed to both a living or a dead person. For example, if you perform two Rakaats Nafl Salaats, then you may convey the reward thereof to your parents or Sheikh, whether they are alive or deceased. Generally, *Isaal-e-Thawaab* is executed for deceased persons, since the living can still do good deeds for themselves whilst the dead cannot. The deceased cannot carry out any rewarding act, and are dependant upon perpetual reward done on their behalf. Also, if one desires to send a gift to the deceased as one would for the living, then *Isaal-e-Thawaab* is the means to do so.

   It is reported in one Hadith that the condition of the people in the graves is like that of one who is drowning in the oceans and he is calling out for help. In the same way the deceased awaits duas etc. from his living parents, brothers, sisters, etc. When he receives it then it is more dear and valuable to him than the entire world and whatever it contains. Allaah Ta`ala grants the deceased mountains of mercy in place of the duas of the living. *Astaghfaar* is the gift of the living to the deceased. [Baihaqi/ Mishkaat, page 206]

   It is reported in a Hadith that the pious servants of Allaah Ta`ala will have their stages raised in Jannat, whereupon they will ask: *"O Allaah! How did I receive this stage?"* A reply will be given: *"This is the benefit of Astaghfaar for you from your children."* [Ahmad / Mishkaat page 206]

   Imaam Sufyaan Thauri (rahmatullahi alaih) states that the deceased depend more on the duas of the living than do the living depend upon food and drink. [Sharah Sudoor Suyuti, page 127]

   Nevertheless, we can assist our deceased buzrugs, friends, close ones, etc. by this means of *Isaal-e-Thawaab*. We can present to them this valuable gift. This is also the need and demand of our attachment to them.

3. Before carrying out the deed wherewith we desire to convey *Isaal-e-Thawaab* we should make the intention or thereafter we must make dua to Allaah Ta`ala that He accept the action and convey the reward onto whoever we wish.

(2). *Isaal-e-*Thawaab may only be made with Nafl Ibaadat. It is not correct to convey the reward of Fardh Ibaadat to someone else.

(3). According to the majority of the Ummah, it is correct to convey the reward onto someone else for all Nafl Ibaadat. For example, dua, Astaghfaar, Thikr, Tasbeeh, Durood Shareef, Tilaawat of Qur`aan, Nafl Salaat and roza, Sadaqah and charity, Nafl Hajj and Qurbaani, etc.

(4). Whilst making *Isaal-e-Thawaab* it is incorrect to harbour this belief that the actual (physical) Sadaqah or charity reaches the deceased. No! The reward which you were supposed to receive for the act, that reward in conveyed to the deceased in the form of *Isaal-e-Thawaab*.

THE CUSTOM OF GYAARWI

Gyaarwi Shareef is the name given to that feast prepared on the eleventh of every lunar month in the name of Hadhrat Mahboob Ghauth Sheikhul Mashaaikh Abdul Qaadir Jilaani (rahmatullahi alaih). In this regard a few points are worth pondering over:

Firstly: When did this custom of *Gyaarwi Shareef* originate? Notwithstanding research on the matter, I have failed to come up with a specific date. This much we can conclude is that this custom of *Gyaarwi Shareef* could only have begun after the demise of Hadhrat Abdul Qaadir Jilaani (rahmatullahi alaih) who was born in the year 470 A.H. and at the age of ninety he passed away, so this custom could only have started after 561 A.H.

This much is also very certain and clear that this custom of *Gyaarwi Shareef* was never celebrated by Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), the Sahaabah-e-Kiraam (radhiAllaahu anhum), the Taabieen (rahmatullahi alaihim), Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullahi alaih) or even Hadhrat Peeraane Peer Abdul Qaadir Jilaani himself.

Now, let us be objective -- can an act which was non-existent in Islaam for at least six centuries, all of a sudden gain such importance, become a part of the Deen and become a supreme act of Ibaadat?

We should consider this point also – are those people who do not celebrate *Gyaarwi Shareef* following in the footsteps of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), the Sahaabah-e-Kiraam (radhiAllaahu anhum), the Taabieen (rahmatullahi alaihim), Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullahi alaih), and Hadhrat Ghauth Paak (rahmatullahi alaih)? Or are those who celebrate this custom following in the footsteps of these pious personalities?

Secondly: If the object of celebrating *Gyaarwi Shareef* is so that the reward thereof is conveyed to Hadhrat Abdul Qaadir Jilaani (rahmatullahi alaih), then undoubtedly this is a blessed intention. However, there are numerous evils and wrongs that take place in the manner of this *Isaal-e-Thawaab*:

One is that whenever one wishes to convey reward one may do so. The Shariah has not specified any particular day or time for this. Those who celebrate *Gyaarwi Shareef* do so punctually only on the 11th night, that it seems this is part of the Shariah. If one has to tell them to hold this celebration on any other day, then they would not be pleased to do so. They are so rigid in this practice that it would indicate to us that their object is not *Isaal-e-Thawaab* only. In fact, they are under the impression that this is such an Ibaadat that it can only be executed on this day. To be firm and punctual on conveying *Isaal-e-Thawaab* only on the 11th is a vain and futile act, which has absolutely no basis in the Shariah. To undretsand this act to be incumbent is like making another Shariah other than the one of Allaah Ta`ala and Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam).

Secondly, on the celebration of *Gyaarwi Shareef* such emphasis is placed on preparing *Kheer* (a milk preparation), whereas if the object was in reality *Isaal-e-Thawaab* then it would be acceptable to give the money spent for this preparation in Sadaqah. Alternatively, that same amount of money could be used to feed some poor person or clothe him in such a way that what one's right hand gives the left hand is unaware of. Such an act, since it is free from show, pomp and pride will be more readily acceptable in the Court of Allaah Ta`ala. To assume that one can only prepare *Kheer* and cook food for *Isaal-e-Thawaab* and to think that it cannot be done except in this way is in reality altering and defacing the Shariah.

Thirdly, reward will only be reaped for that food which is prepared for and fed to the poor and needy. However on the occasion of *Gyaarwi Shareef* people eat the prepared food themselves and feed their friends and family. Very little, if any, consideration is given to the poor and needy. Notwithstanding this, these people are under the impression that there will be reward for this and that it will be conveyed to Hadhrat Abdul Qaadir Jilaani (rahmatullahi alaih). This is also contrary to the generally accepted rule of the Shariah, which states that reward is only reaped for that Sadaqah which is given to the poor and needy. There is no virtue or reward in the mere preparation of food.

Fourthly, many people deem the food of *Gyaarwi Shareef* as being blessed, whereas it has just been established that the food prepared for oneself is not termed as Sadaqah, neither is there any connection between this and *Isaal-e-Thawaab* for Hadhrat Peeraane Peer (rahmatullahi alaih). The reward for that food which was given in Sadaqah will undoubtedly be reaped, but Sadaqah is mentioned in the Hadith as ***"Ausaaghun Naas"*** (the excess and filth of the people). This is the reason why it is not permissible for the family of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) to accept Sadaqah. Is is not contrary to the teachings of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) to regard what Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) has termed as dirt and filth, as being 'blessed' and to feed it with great enthusiasm to the rich and wealthy?

One should also ponder over this fact that when one conveys *Isaal-e-Thawaab* in the form of grain or clothes, is this ever regarded as being 'blessed'?

And finally, under which Shar`i principle does any food given on the 11th of the month become 'blessed'?

Fifthly, people feel that if they do not give *Gyaarwi Shareef* then harm will befall their loves and wealth or that there will be no barkat in their wealth. It is as though a deficiency in Salaat, roza, Hajj and Zakaat, which are definite Faraaidh, will not spoil anything, but one small slip-up on *Gyaarwi Shareef* and one's life and wealth are at stake. Let us be just – an act which has absolutely no validity in the Shariah or in the Fiqh of Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullahi alaih), to regard it as being more venerated than even the Faraaidh and to have such beliefs regarding it that one does not have such beliefs for the Fardh acts, then is there any doubt that this is a unique and separate Shariah? *Inna Lillaahi Wa Inna Ilaihi Raajioon*

Another point for reflection is that no Muslim harbours this belief that if *Isaal-e-Thawaab* is not made for Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), the Sahaabah-e-Kiraam (radhiAllaahu anhum), the Taabieen (rahmatullahi alaihim) or other pious personalities then some harm will befall their lives or wealth. I plead ignorance on the reasoning behind any harm befalling one if *Gyaarwi Shareef* is not made for Hadhrat Peeraane Peer (rahmatullahi alaih).

Our brothers who are involved in this should reflect and ponder that they are actually causing harm to Hadhrat Abdul Qaadir Jilaani (rahmatullahi alaih).

Thirdly: whilst it may be possible that some people celebrated *Gyaarwi Shareef* with the intention of *Isaal-e-Thawaab* for Hadhrat (rahmatullahi alaih) but experience has shown that *Gyaarwi Shareef* is not kept as *Isaal-e-Thawaab*. Once a buzrug gave a talk in some village. He told the people that when making *Gyaarwi Shareef* they should make the intention that they are giving Sadaqah in the Name of Allaah Ta`ala and whatever reward they receive for it must be conveyed to Hadhrat Jilaani (rahmatullahi alaih). Someone retorted that this (*Gyaarwi Shareef*) is not done in Allaah Ta`ala's Name, it is done in the name of Hadhrat Peeraane Peer (rahmatullahi alaih).

From this one can gauge that *Gyaarwi Shareef* is not held for the *Isaal-e-Thawaab* of Hadhrat (rahmatullahi alaih), but rather, it is held so as to gain proximity to Hadhrat (rahmatullahi alaih) just as one would give charity so as to gain proximity to Allaah Ta`ala. This is the reason why these people regard their not holding this custom, to bode evil for their lives and wealth. Due to ignorance these people are treading dangerous ground with regard their Aqaa`id.

Fourthly: Those people who have studied Hadhrat Jilaani's *Ghuniatut Taalibeen* and his other works will understand and realise that hadhrat (rahmatullahi alaih) was a follower of Imaam Ahmad Ibn Hambal (rahmatullahi alaih). It is as though his beliefs are exactly the same as that of the present-day Arabs who are termed as *Najdis and Wahhaabis*. In the view of Hadhrat (rahmatullahi alaih) and that of his Imaam, the person who omits Salaat becomes a kaafir. If Hadhrat Jilaani (rahmatullahi alaih) were in the world today, then upon noting the condition of those who omit Salaat, roza etc. but punctually celebrate *Gyaarwi Shareef*, he will have to declare them as kaafir, based on his Fiqhi stand. Then these people would call him a *"Wahhaabi"* as they do the *Najdis.*

The crux of the matter is that if anyone wishes to make *Isaal-e-Thawaab* for any pious personality, which in itself is meritorious, but the custom which is held in the name of *Gyaarwi Shareef* is incorrect and impermissible, as expounded above. Without specifying any date or time, whatever charity one wishes to convey as *Isaal-e-Thawaab,* one may do so at his own convenience.

KHATAM AT FEASTS

It is noted that when people feed as a token of *Isaal-e-Thawaab* then some *Miajee* (molvi) has to read something (over the food / at the feast). Some people call it *Faatihah Shareef* and others call it *Khatam Shareef*.

Upon cursory inspection of this act it appears to be commendable, and some people are smitten by it purely due to this external façade. However, some points regarding it need to be studied:

Firstly: This practice was non-existent during the eras of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) and the Salf-e-Saaliheen, therefore without any doubt this act is contrary to the Sunnat. As you have already read previously, the words of Hadhrat Shah Abdul Haqq Muhaddith Dehlwi (rahmatullahi alaih), that any act which is contrary to the Sunnah is an evil act and it is necessary to abstain therefrom. If this act had any Shar`i benefit and virtue, then the Salf-e-Saaliheen would not have deprived themselves of it.

Secondly: The general masses believe that if *Khatam* is not made in this way, then the reward does not reach the deceased. You may have heard people saying *"Marr Gya Mardud Na Faatihah Na Durood"* (He died deprived, without any Faatihah or Durood). This notion and belief is not merely incorrect and erroneous, in fact, it is a direct slur upon the Deen of Allaah Ta`ala and Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). It is as though a new Shariah is being created. The reason being that neither did Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) advocate or teach such methods for *Isaal-e-Thawaab* nor the Salf-e-Saaliheen.

Thirdly: It is said that if some Surahs are recited over the food, then what harm can there be? On the other hand, what can be worse than this, since it is contrary to the Sunnat and the Shariah of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). Besides this, our Ulama of the Ahle Sunnat have stated that it is a mark of disrespect to recite the Qur`aan Majeed over food. It is stated in the Fatwa of Hadhrat Shah Abdul Azeez Muhaddith Dehlwi (rahmatullahi alaih):

"QUESTION: What is the ruling of the person who recites the Qur`aan Majeed over food? One [person avers that to recite Qur`aan Majeed over food is like reading it in a toilet]. Nauthubillaah."

ANSWER: It is not appropriate to say this, in fact, it is disrespectful. Yes, if it is said like this: 'Similarly to recite the Qur`aan over food is disrespectful', then there would be no harm. This disrespect will also be when it is not read as a means of advice and discourse. But to recite it as a means of advice and discourse or to prevent from Bid`ah, then it will be correct on any occasion. In fact, in order to discourage from Bid`ah it would sometimes be Waajib."

From this extract of Hadhrat Shah Saheb (rahmatullahi alaih) it is clear that to recite the Qur`aan Majeed over food is a type of disrespect.

Fourthly: One of the worst things that is practiced at theses functions is that the *Miajee* who is called to recite this *Khatam* over the food, takes some of the food with him in lieu for his 'services'. The house-folk give this *Miajee* some food in payment for his recital of *Khatam*. If *Miajee* does not read *Khatam,* then he is deprived of the food and if the house-folk do not give *Miajee* any food, then he does not present himself for this *Khatam*. It is as though *Miajee's Khatam* and the house-folk's food are commodities of exchange, where the one is traded for the other. You are well aware of this fact that if a person recites the Qur`aan Majeed in exchange for something, then there is no reward in it for him, and similarly if someone feeds another in exchange for something else, then also they are deprived of any reward.

Fifthly: I have noted in some places that no one is allowed to partake of the food until the *Khatam* is read over it. At times, when the *Miajee* is delayed, then even the children are deprived of the food until he arrives, even though they cry incessantly. Whereas, as I have mentioned earlier, the reward for the food will be attained if it is fed to some poor and needy persons for the Pleasure of Allaah Ta`ala. Why then must there be so much rigidity in this custom that until the *Khatam* is not read, even the children are deprived of the food?

Sixthly: Actually the customs of *Teeja, Saatwah, Daswah, Gyaarwi and Khatam* have all been 'inherited' and passed on from the Hindus. The reason being that besides India (and now IndoPak and also amongst South African Indians), this custom is not practiced anywhere else. The Hindu method of *'Isaal-e-Thawaab'* and their specifying special dates and time for these customs have been expounded upon in the book *'Kitaabul Hind'*.

The new Muslim, Moulana Ubaidullaah, who before being endowed with the wealth of Imaan was a Hindu Pandit, has enumerated on some of the Hindu customs in his Kitaab *'Tuhfatul Hind'*. He states:

"It is kept after the death of a Brahmin on the 11th day, after the death of a Kahtri on the 13th day, after the death of a Desh, i.e. Banya, etc. on the 15th or 16th day, after the death of a Shoodar, i.e. Baaldi, etc. on the 30th or 31st day… also six months after death. On a certain day a cow is even fed. Every year during the first half of the month of Aswaj reward is conveyed to the deceased buzrugs. However, they regard it as being incumbent to convey reward to the dead on the day (date) of their death. The conveying of reward through preparation of food is called 'Saraadh'. Prior to the food of 'Saraadh' being served, the Pandit is first called to recite some incantations over it. Like this there are other days also."

Due to all these evil and vile practices, I regard the act of reciting the Qur`aan Majeed in front of food as a useless and futile custom. I further deem the understanding of this custom as a means of Islaamic *Isaal-e-Thawaab* and the rigidity with which it is carried out as a Bid`ah. Although we will not say that the food prepared and fed in this way is Haraam or that this practice is akin to *Shirk*, nevertheless we will brand it as a Bid`ah.

I have previously outlined the Sunnat method of *Isaal-e-Thawaab*, but will briefly summarise it hereunder:

(1). Dua and Astaghfaar may be regularly made for one's deceased buzrugs and friends.

(2). As much as is possible, one may recite Durood Shareef, make Tilaawat of Qur`aan Shareef, recite Kalimah and Tasbeeh, etc. and convey the *Isaal-e-Thawaab* to someone else. If every Muslim daily recites Durood Shareef thrice, Surah Faatihah and Surah Ikhlaas and conveys the reward onto the deceased, then the right which is due upon us for the deceased will, to a certain extent be fulfilled.

(3). Nafl Salaat, roza, Hajj and Qurbaani may also be conveyed as *Isaal-e-Thawaab*.

(4). Sadaqah and charity may also be conveyed as *Isaal-e-Thawaab*, but there is no specific time and place for the execution of this. Neither should the preparation of food be specified for this, nor the attendance of *Miajee*. Whenever it is convenient for one, then occasionally some money, clothes, grain or whatever item is suitable may be given to the poor with the intention of gaining Allaah Ta`ala's Pleasure.

This then, is the method of *Isaal-e-Thawaab* which was taught to us by Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) and which was practiced by our seniors and Salf-e-Saaliheen of the Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamaat.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, I would like to list a few things which the Ulama of the Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamaat have branded as Bid`ah. All Muslims of the Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamaat must necessarily abstain from such acts. Those who practice these acts are not from the Ahle Sunnat, rather they belong to the Ahle Bid`ah:

To have all sorts of functions and festivities at the gravesites. To solidify the graves. To construct domes at the graves. To drape sheets (*Chadars)* over the graves. To prostrate at the graves. To make Tawaaf there. To stand there as though you are in Salaat. To kiss the graves and tombs. To lick/stroke them. To make *Nazar* (vows) and *Niyaaz* there. To place flowers there. To have *Urs* for the pious. To place things on their graves. To have *Qawaali* (music and songs). To call people and have all sorts of festivities there. To make *Minnat* on the name of buzrugs. To make sacrifices on their names. To make dua of them. To light lamps at their graves. To celebrate *Eid Meelad* on the 12th Rabiul Awwal. To light lamps on this occasion. To listen to fabricated narrations on the occasion of *Meelad*. To recite incorrect and inappropriate poems. To make images of the blessed grave of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), to make images and models of the Kaabatullaah. To kiss the thumbs when Athaan and Iqaamat are being recited. To shake vigorously whilst making Thikr, such that it disturbs those performing Salaat. To regard the standing up before the Mukabbir says *"Qad Qaamatis Salaat"* in the Iqaamat as being bad. To shake hands after Salaat. To recite Durood and Salaam before the Athaan. To

celebrate *Gyaarwi Shareef*. To make *Khatam* over food. To celebrate *Teejaa, Nawaah, Daswah, Beeswah, and Chaaliswah,* etc. To invent special and specific ways and methods for making *Isaal-e-Thawaab,* and to rigidly adhere to them. To have *Maatam* in Muharram. To take out *Ta`ziyah* (Shiah custom). To make *Alam* and *Duldul*. To take remuneration for reciting the Qur`aan Shareef. To give Athaan at the graveside. To place grain on the graves, etc., etc.

May Allaah Ta`ala grant all Muslims the *Taufeeq* to follow the Sunnat of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) and save themselves from all Bid`ah. And may I, you and all Muslims be blessed and favoured with the intercession and companionship of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) on the Day of Qiyaamah. Aameen.

SUPPLEMENTARY NUMBER 1

PLACING FLOWERS ON THE GRAVES

Question:

You have stated in answer to a question which appeared in the daily *Jang* on the 12th of December that to place flowers on a grave is contrary to the Sunnat. In the 19th December issue a person by the name of Shah Turaabul Haq Qaadri has labelled you a *Jaahil* (ignoramus) and has stated that you are ignorant of Qur`aan Majeed and Sunnah and he has stated this act (placing flowers on the grave) as a Sunnah. This has placed many people in trepidation. You could kindly remove the doubt.

Answer:

The Shar`i definition of *Sunnat* is described as those actions which have come to us since the inception of the Deen. Hence, that action which was the practice of our Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) is regarded as a *Sunnat*. Similarly those actions of the Khulafaa-e-Raashideen, the Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum) and the Taabieen (rahmatullahi alaihim) also fall under the definition of *Sunnat*.

It has to be established regarding any action whether it is a Sunnat or not. A simple method of doing this is to ascertain whether this act was common during the *Khairul Quroon* (Best of Eras). Those actions which were prevalent since the time of the initial stages of Islaam will undoubtedly be a Sunnat. Those who carry out such acts will be classified as *Ahle Sunnat* or *Sunnis*. On the other hand, those actions which were innovated subsequent to this blessed era (initial stages of Islaam), if it is regarded as a good action and worthy of reward then it will be classified as a Bid`ah. Those people who carry out such acts will be termed as *Ahle Bid`ah* or *Bid`atees*.

Our Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) buried numerous Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum). Alhamdulillah there is no shortage of flowers in Madinah Tayyibah. Did Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) placed flowers on any grave? After the demise of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) did the Khulafaa-e-Raashideen place flowers on his blessed grave? Have the Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum) placed flowers on the blessed graves of the Khulafaa-e-Raashideen or the Taabieen on the graves of the Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum)? In the entire

treasure of Ahaadith one will not find a single narration which states that Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), the Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum) or the Tabieen (rahmatullahi alaihim) ever placed flowers on a grave. Therefore how can any action be classified as a Sunnah when it was never established from Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) right upto the lowest Tabiee?

If a certain thing was not present during the era of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) or the Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum) or the Taabieen (rahmatullahi alaihim), in fact it came into existence after all of them and a certain Imaam of Ijtihaad has classified it as being permissible and virtuous, then although we will not say that this thing is Sunnah but since it is a *Qiyaas* (analogy) of the Imaam of Ijtihaad which is also a proof of the Shariah, hence this act cannot be classified as being contrary to the Shariah. In fact, this act is understood as being established from the Sunnah.

This (method of proving validity) cannot be established for the mas`alah under discussion. The reason for this is that flowers and graves are not such thing which were non-existent during the era of the *Khairul Quroon*. It is obvious that during the time of our Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) there were graves and flowers. It would have been a simple matter to place flowers on the grave. If this was a commendable act then our Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) would have made it a common practice and advocated it either by word or action.

The compilation of Hanafi Fiqh commenced during the time of Imaam A`zam (rahmatullahi alaih). Since the second century upto the 10th century, without exaggeration, thousands of *Fiqhi* Kitaabs were compiled. Our Fuqahaa have enumerated in great detail even the smallest of *Mustahibbaat* (meritorious acts) and *Sunan* and etiquettes regarding *kafan dafan* (burial rites). But, ten centuries of *Fiqhi* literature is completely void of stating that the act of placing flowers on the grave is Sunnat. Now, if this act was a Sunnat then how come the Hanafi Aimmah of ten centuries were unaware of it? How can this act ever find place in the Sunnat when it was not found during the era of *Khairul Quroon* neither in the treasure of Ahaadith nor the treasure of a decade of *Fiqh* nor did Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) practice it nor the Khulafaa-e-Raashideen (radhiAllaahu anhum), nor the Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum) nor the Taabieen (rahmatullahi alaihim), nor the Aimmah-e-Mujtahiddeen nor ten centuries of Ulama?

It is necessary to state here also that how is it ever possible to declare as "Sunnat" the approval of those who came in the eras that followed? The permissibility of it cannot also be established. Imaam Rabbaani Alfe Thaani (rahmatullahi alaih) states quoting from *Fataawa Ghayaathia:*

"Sheikh Imaam Shaheed (rahmatullahi alaih) says that we do not accept the approvals of the Mashaaikh of Balkh. We only accept the statements of our companions who are from the predecessors. The reason being that a custom of any particular place is not a proof for its permissibility. Those practices which have come to us from the initial eras are a proof for its permissibility. That is, those actions which are established as having been found in Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) and the Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum). This implies that it has been consented to by Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). But if is not like this then the actions of people cannot be construed as being a proof. An exception would be such an action which is practiced by all nations in every country, in which case it would be regarded as Ijma`. Ijma` is a proof in the Shariah. See here, if people become commonly involved in the sale of alcohol and in dealing in interest then (such acts) can never be granted a ruling of permissibility." [Maktoob 54, part 2]

The explanation of that Hadith quoted by Shah Saheb remains, wherein Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) broke up one twig into two parts and placed it on the graves of two persons who were being punished, saying that as long as the twigs do not get dry there is hope that the punishment of the inmates of those graves will be alleviated. In this regard we need to consider a few points:

Firstly, that this narration was reported by various Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum). It is the opinion of Imaam Nawawi and Qurtubi (rahmatullahi alaihima) that all these narrations point to one incident. However Hafiz Ibn Hajar and Allaamah Aini (rahmatullahi alaihima) are of the opinion that these are three separate incidents. It is difficult for us to establish with certainty whether this refers to one particular incident or a few. However a common feature in all these narrations is this that it was not a common practice of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi

wasallam) to plant twigs in the graves. In fact, one or two such incidents occurred where twigs were planted on the graves of persons who were being punished.

Secondly, there is also a question as to whether the inmates of these graves were Muslim or Kaafir. Abu Moosa Madeeni states that the inmates of these graves were Kaafir, whereas other personalities aver that they were Muslim. Hafiz (rahmatullahi alaih) states that the Hadith of Jaabir (radhiAllaahu anhu) clearly indicates that the inmates of the graves were Kaafir whilst the Hadith of Ibn Abbaas (radhiAllaahu anhu) indicate that they were Muslim. [*Fathul Baari, page 256, vol. 1*]

Were these the graves of Muslims or Kaafirs? This much is certain that the Hadith is explicit that the action of planting the twigs upon the graves were done for those who were being punished and this was made known to Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) by means of absolute *Wahi* or authentic *Kashf*. Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) did not plant twigs on the graves of common Muslims, neither was this a common practice during the time of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), the Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum) or the Tabieen (rahmatullahi alaih), it is apparent from this that to plant twigs on the graves is not a common or desired Sunnat practice of our Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam).

Thirdly, the blessed words of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) were: ***"There is hope that as long as these twigs do not get dry the punishment in these graves will be alleviated."*** The commentators have discussed at length the reasons and possibilities of this. It is appropriate that we mention here the words of Hadhrat Shah Abdul Haqq Muhaddith Dehlwi (rahmatullahi alaih):

"There is a difference of opinion amongst the Ulama in this Hadith as to what the basis is for Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) stating that he has hope that as long as the twigs remain fresh the punishment in the graves will be lessened.
Some people opine that it is based upon this fact that plants make the Tasbeeh of Allaah Ta`ala as long as they are fresh. The Aayat: ***'And there is nothing except that it hymns the Tasbeeh and praise of its Rabb',*** *refers to living things. The life of a twig remains as long as it does not get dry. The life of a stone remains as long as it does not break up. Or a special Tasbeeh is attributed to the living and that Tasbeeh which is common to everything indicates towards the existence of The Creator and towards His Oneness and perfect Qualities. This group prove the placing of greenery and flowers upon graves based on this Hadith.*

Imaam Khattaabi (rahmatullahi alaih), who is from amongst the Aimmah of Ahle Ilm and the notable commentators of Hadith, has refuted this view. He has refuted the act of placing greenery and flowers on graves by those who hold on to this Hadith. He states that this act has no basis and it was not practiced during the initial eras.

Some aver that this limit of lessening of the punishment was owing to the intercession of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). Hence, the intercession of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) was accepted to last as long as the twigs remained fresh. The words ***'la`alla'*** *in the Hadith indicate towards this. And Allaah Ta`ala knows best.*
Allaamah Kirmani states that there is no speciality to prevent punishment which is inherent in twigs. In fact the lessening of the punishment was owing to the blessed hand and miracle of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). Some personalities state that the knowledge and secret of this is confined to Nubuwwat. It is stated in Jaami`ul Usool that Hadhrat Buraidah (radhiAllaahu anhu) made a bequest for two twigs to be placed on his grave since it is possible that there is a secret therein and it becomes a means of his success".

This discussion of Sheikh makes clear that the reason for the lessening of the punishment in these graves was the intercession of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) or owing to the blessedness of his Mubarak hands or his miracle. Otherwise there is no speciality in twigs which can ward off punishment. This much is also established that the Ijtihaad and proof of those who aver that the Tasbeeh of fresh twigs is the reason for the alleviation of punishment in the graves and their attribution of this on all greenery and flowers, has no validity and status. This view of theirs carries no weight or value in the eyes of the Ahle Ilm. In fact the Aimmah of the Ahle Ilm and the notable commentators of Hadith have refuted this claim saying that it is completely baseless and it is contrary to the practice of the initial era.

Hadhrat Sheikh Abdul Haqq Muhaddith Dehlwi (rahmatullahi alaih) states in the Arabic commentary of Mishkaat, *Lam`aatul Tanqee`*, quoting the famous Hanafi Faqeeh and Muhaddith Imaam Fadhlullah Turpishty (rahmatullahi alaih):

"Turpishty says that the reason for this limit (of alleviation of punishment) is that Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) interceded for the lessening of punishment in the graves for as long as the twigs remained fresh. This view of some people remains, who claim that the reason (for the alleviation of punishment) is the Tasbeeh made by the twigs as long as they are fresh. Therefore (they claim) this is the thing which lessens the punishment in the grave. This view is completely baseless and worthless. According to the Ahle Ilm this view has no credence or credibility." [Page 44 vol. 2]

It is apparent from the explanation of Hadhrat Sheikh (rahmatullahi alaih) that alien custom innovated by the people based on this Hadith where they place greenery and flowers on the graves is baseless and without any substance or worth. This act is also contrary to the practice of the initial eras.

Fourthly, if we assume that this view and substantiation of these people, which the Ahle Ilm have discounted as being without substance and worth, is correct and has some validity, even then it can only be said that placing twigs on graves would be Sunnat and not flowers. Hence, Allaamah Aini (rahmatullahi alaih), who accepts this reasoning states:

"And similarly, that action of most people, that is of placing greenery and flowers on the graves, is worthless. The Sunnat act is to only pace twigs." [Umdatul Qaari, page 879, vol.1]

Fifthly, also, if we assume this reasoning of these people to be correct, then too, this would establish the placing of twigs only on the graves of Kuffaar, Fussaaq and Fujjaar and not on the graves of the Auliyaa. As has been mentioned previously, Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) did not place twigs except upon the graves of those who were being punished. Neither did he encourage this act nor was this the practice of the Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum) or the Taabieen (rahmatullahi alaihim). Hence, this reasoning does not validate placing of flowers on the graves of pious personalities, even though it is called a Sunnat or Mustahab. How strange it is that the act which Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) practiced for the graves of kuffaar and sinners is being done upon the graves of pious personalities.

It is possible, Allaah Ta`ala knows best, that the wisdom of Nabi's (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) not placing twigs on the graves of the common Muslimeen is that the placing of twigs is a bad omen implying that the inmate of the grave is being punished. The Shariah discourages and dislikes any such act wherein there is evil thought or omen for other believers. Hence, using this Hadith as a basis for placing flowers on the graves of pious personalities is an act of disrespect.

In reality, the act that is common nowadays of placing flowers and sheets upon the graves in not in imitation of this Hadith at all. In fact, it is done as a mark of respect for the grave and as a means of gaining proximity to the inmate of the grave. Our Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) has definitely never sanctioned or allowed placing of flowers on graves as a mark of respect for the grave or as a means of gaining proximity to its inmate.

Not even the slightest prospect of permissibility can ever be found in this Hadith. Therefore, the customary act of placing flowers and *chadars* on the graves of pious personalities and leaders in the name of respect etc. is an act which was never found amongst or sanctioned by our pious predecessors or latter Ulama. This is the reason why there is absolutely no doubt that such an act is an evil Bid`ah. This is a custom which has permeated into the Muslims through the Christians, Jews and Hindus.

One of the specialities of Bid`ah is that as it penetrates into a community, then slowly, slowly it permeates into the minds of the Ulama who are also eventually affected with it, which results in the hatred and dislike for Bid`ah leaving them (i.e. they begin to like and accept it). This is the reason why these Ulama will, by hook or by crook, find some permissibility and even virtue for such acts. In this way they become instrumental in promoting and advocating Bid`ah instead of bringing alive the Sunnah.

After this brief explanation of the Hadith of Jareedah, I will now examine the references of Shah Turaabul Haqq Saheb.

Amongst them the first is that from Hadhrat Sheikh Abdul Haqq Muhaddith Dehlwi (rahmatullahi alaih) from *Ash`atul Lam`aat*. The complete text of this has been quoted previously. Upon proper perusal of this, any sane and rational person can, for himself, discern whether Hadhrat Sheikh (rahmatullahi alaih) is sanctioning the act of placing flowers on the graves or whether he condemns this act as being a Bid`ah without any substance or base. As for those who practice this act, does Hadhrat Sheikh (rahmatullahi alaih) accept their view or does he regard it as being an act without any worth or consideration?

Shah Saheb cites this as his second reference:

"Mullah Ali Qaari has stated, in commenting on this Hadith in Mirqaat, that it is Sunnat to place flowers on the graves."

Sheikh Ali Qaari (rahmatullahi alaih), whilst commenting on this Hadith first quotes Imaam Nawawi (rahmatullahi alaih). An extract of this is:

"This act which some people carry out of placing date-palm leaves on the graves has been refuted by Imaam Khattaabi. He has stated that it is without any substantiation or basis."

Sheikh Ali Qaari (rahmatullahi alaih), states under this extract:

"There is discussion regarding this refutation of Khattaabi and his averring that it is without any substance, because this Hadith does have the capability of forming a basis for this act. I have noted that Ibn Hajar has explained this point, saying: 'The statement of Khattaabi that this has no basis is objectionable. In fact, this Hadith is the base of basis. Based upon this, our latter-day companions and some Ulama have given the ruling that the practice of some people who place flowers and twigs on the graves is a Sunnat based upon this Hadith.'"

Sheikh Ali Qaari (rahmatullahi alaih), after citing this statement of Ibn Hajar (rahmatullahi alaih) states:

"It is possible that the reason for this statement of Khattaabi is that this Hadith is restricted to one particular incident and does not apply generally. Reflect, this is a matter of careful consideration." [Mirqaat, page 351, vol.1]

The following can be gleaned from the statements of Sheikh Ali Qaari (rahmatullahi alaih):

1. He has not ruled the placing of flowers on the graves as a Sunnat, in fact, he has cited the view of Ibn Hajar (rahmatullahi alaih) that this is the Fatwa of some latter-day Shaafi Ulama.

2. Sheikh Ali Qaari (rahmatullahi alaih) could not find any ruling of permissibility for this act amongst the Hanafi Ulama which declares it as a Sunnah. It is not known that any of our Hanafi Ulama, former or latter, gave such a ruling.

3. It has to be noted that this view quoted by Ibn Hajar (rahmatullahi alaih) of some latter-day Shaafi Ulama holds no real worth, since these proponents of this view are neither Mujtahids, nor are they comparable to Imaam Khattaabi or Nawawi (rahmatullahi alaihima). The latter-day Shaafis cannot compare to Khattaabi or Nawawi (rahmatullahi alaihima) who are second to none amongst the Shaafi Aimmah in so far as their knowledge, virtue, piety and Taqwa are concerned.

4. Sheikh Ali Qaari (rahmatullahi alaih) authenticates the view of Khattaabi (rahmatullahi alaih). He refers to this Mas`alah as being worthy of reflection. Whatever he has written on this subject is not in the category of a Fatwa. In fact, it is merely a discussion.

Keeping all this in mind, for one to aver that Sheikh Ali Qaari (rahmatullahi alaih) has stated that the placing of flowers on graves is a Sunnat constitutes a deficiency in understanding and knowledge.

His third reference is the footnote of *Tahtaawi* from *Miraaqiul Falaah*:

"Some of our latter-day companions have given the ruling based on this Hadith that the custom of placing fragrant flowers on the graves is a Sunnat."

It appears that Shah Saheb has not viewed this footnote of Tahtaawi with his own eyes, otherwise he would have noted that that this is not the text in Tahtaawi. In fast he has cited this from Sheikh Ali Qaari's (rahmatullahi alaih) commentary of Mishkaat. In the commentary of Mishkaat (the discussion regarding which has passed above), the ruling of our Hanafi Ulama has not been quoted. Reference was quoted from Ibn Hajar Shaafi (rahmatullahi alaih).

Shah Saheb has quoted a reference from Allaamah Shaami (rahmatullahi alaih):

"They have said that it is Mustahab."

This quotation is also unfortunately misleading and deceptive. The details on this matter is that Allaamah Shaami (rahmatullahi alaih) states this Mas`alah from *Bahrur Raa`iq*, etc. that it is Makrooh to uproot the fresh grass in a graveyard. As long as it remains fresh it hymns the Tasbeeh of Allaah Ta`ala. This is a form of solace for the deceased and they attain mercy thereby. Quoting the Hadith of Jareedah as a proof, Allaamah Shaami (rahmatullahi alaih) states:

"The placing of twigs on a grave may be construed as a Mustahab based on this Mas`alah and Hadith, provided it is done as an imitation. Qiyaas is made on this for the placing of certain twigs, which is customary in our time. One group amongst the Shaafis have expounded upon this. This is preferred to the view of some Maalikis that the alleviation of punishment in the graves was owing to the blessed hand and dua of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). Qiyaas cannot be made upon this."

This text of Allaamah Shaami (rahmatullahi alaih) does not imply that it is Mustahab to place flowers on the grave. In fact, it is stated that if twigs are planted on the graves in imitation to Nabi's (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) act, then it can be construed as a Mustahab. This reasoning is as has been quoted from Imaam Turpishty (rahmatullahi alaih) previously, where he clearly mentions this to be worthless and of no consideration according to the Ahle Ilm. Any person can ascertain the validity of making Qiyaas on an act which is regarded as worthless and baseless. The statement of Allaamah Shaami (rahmatullahi alaih) that this reasoning is preferred to that of some Maalikis that the lessening of the punishment in the graves is not due to the twigs of the tree, rather owing to the blessed hand and dua of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). Firstly, for him to attribute this view to some Maalikis is strange. You have noted from our previous discussion that is the view of the Shaafi Aimmah, like Khattaabi, Nawawi, Saazri (rahmatullahi alaihim) and other Ulama. Imaam Turpishty (rahmatullahi alaih) has clearly stated this to be the view of the Ahle Ilm. We understand from the statement of Imaam Turpishty (rahmatullahi alaih) that the Ahle Ilm from the four Mathaaib have unanimously slated this reasoning (which is stated by Shaami as being preferred) as worthless and not worthy of any consideration.

Also, the Hadith of Hadhrat Jaabir (radhiAllaahu anhu) clearly gives the view of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) in his own words regarding what Allaamah Shaami (rahmatullahi alaih) has regarded as being not preferred - the view he attributes to some Maalikis – where he prefers the view which is *"Not worthy of any consideration according to the Ahle Ilm"*. The words of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) are:

"I desire that through my intercession their punishment is lessened as long as these two twigs remain fresh."
[Saheeh Muslim, page 418, vol. 2]

Therefore the reasoning of Tasbeeh when pitted against the clear *Nass* is rejected. Regardless of how noteworthy any view may be, it can never be preferred to that of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam).

If we assume that this was not reported in the Hadith, rather it is the view of some Maalikis, even then it would be unpalatable to any lover of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) to prefer the reasoning that the punishment was alleviated because of the Tasbeeh of plants as compared to the blessed hand and dua of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam).

In conclusion, Allaamah Shaami (rahmatullahi alaih) has not stated that it is Mustahab to place flowers on a grave, in fact, he stated that planting twigs can be construed as Mustahab. And then too, this reasoning is refuted by the Ahle Ilm as being without any basis and worthless.

Shah Saheb has cited a reference from *Kashf Noor* of Sheikh Abdul Ghaniy Naabulusi (rahmatullahi alaih). This booklet has not come to the attention of this humble servant so that I may place it in proper context. Nevertheless, this much is clear that whether it may be Allaamah Shaami (rahmatullahi alaih) or Sheikh Abdul Ghaniy Naabulusi (rahmatullahi alaih), they are all followers (Muqallids) of Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullahi alaih), just like us. The meaning and import of Taqleed is that we follow the view of the Mujtahiddeen, without making use of personal opinion. in this regard we will quote the words of Imaam Rabbaani Mujaddid Alfe Thaani (rahmatullahi alaih):

"Here we consider the view of Imaam Abu Hanifah, Imaam Abu Yusuf or Imaam Muhammed and not the action of Abu Bakr Shibli or Abul Hasan Noori." [Maktoob 265]

Nowadays whatever takes place at the shrines of the saints is not the Sunnat of our Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), neither did it find its niche in the best of eras. In fact this is all the invention of the *Sharrul Quroon* (worst of eras).

Hadhrat Sheikh Abdul Haqq Dehlwi (rahmatullahi alaih) states:

"Many actions deeds and ways which were Makrooh and detestable during the age of the Salf-e-Saaliheen has become desired and acceptable in the last of eras. Wherever the ignoramuses and masses carry out any act, then there is certainty that the souls of the pious are not pleased. They (the pious) are free from (blame for) all this." [Sharhe Safar-e-Sa`aadat, page 272]

It is sad that Shah Saheb has attempted to establish the customs and innovations of the masses as being from the Sunnat of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). The initiation of this was not to be found amongst the pious predecessors neither in ten centuries of Fiqhi literature. Hadhrat Imaam Rabbaani Mujaddid Alfe Thaani (rahmatullahi alaih) has clearly stated:

"As long as a person does not abstain from Bid`ah-e-Hasana as he would from Bid`ah-e-Sayyia, he will not even smell the fragrance of this treasure (following the Sunnat). This is extremely difficult nowadays, because the ocean of Bid`ah is all over wherein people are drowned. They cling onto the darkness of Bid`ah. Who dares to oppose Bid`ah? Or bring alive a Sunnat?
In this era the Ulama are the ones who initiate the Bid`ah customs and destroy the Sunnat. Those Bid`ahs which have penetrated on all fronts, are not only given consent, in fact, they are even granted the Fatwa of being virtuous. People are even guided towards Bid`ahs." [Maktoob 54, part 2]

SUPPLEMETARY NUMBER 2

THE RULING OF THE BEARD

Question:

1. What is the Shar`i status of a beard -- Is it Waajib or Sunnat? Is the shaving of a beard Makrooh or Haraam? Many people understand the keeping of a beard to be a Sunnat, which if kept is meritorious and if not kept then there is no sin. How correct are these views?
2. Is there a specified length in the Shariah for a beard? If there is then what is it?
3. It is the habit of some Huffaaz that just before Ramadhaan they start keeping a beard and after Ramadhaan they shave it off. Will it be permissible to have such Huffaaz as Imaams for Taraaweeh or not? Will the Salaat read behind them be correct or not?
4. Some people view the beard with disdain and have a dislike for it. They prevent their children from keeping beards, and rebuke and chastise them. Some people make the condition of removing the beard prior to marriage. What is the ruling of such people?
5. Some people keep a beard for the duration of a Hajj trip and remove it after returning home. There are others who even shave their beards whilst on Hajj. Is the Hajj of such people accepted?
6. Some people do not keep a beard for fear that if they sin or do any wrong action, then they will bring disrepute and degradation to the bearded ones and that it will be an insult to the sanctity of the beard. What is the ruling regarding such people?

Answer:

Answer to question #1:

To shave the beard or to trim it (less than a fist-length) is Haraam and a major sin. In this regard I will firstly cite a few Ahaadith and thereafter discuss some points:

(i). ***"It is reported from Hadhrat Aishah (radhiAllaahu anha) that Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) said: 'Ten things are from the Fitrat (natural constitution of man); clipping the moustache, lengthening the beard,….'"*** [Muslim, page 129, vol. 1]

(ii). ***"It is reported from Ibn Umar (radhiAllaahu anhuma) that Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) said: 'Clip the moustache and lengthen the beard.'***
In another narration he ordered with the clipping of the moustache and lengthening the beard."

(iii). ***"Ibn Umar (radhiAllaahu anhuma) reports that Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) said: 'Oppose the Mushrikeen, fill (lengthen) your beards and clip your moustaches.'"*** [Agreed upon, Mishkaat, page 380]

(iv). "***It is reported from Abu Hurairah (radhiAllaahu anhu) that Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) said: 'Trim your moustaches and lengthen your beards. Oppose the fire-worshipers.'"*** [Saheeh Muslim, page 129]

(v). ***"It is reported from Zaid Bin Arqam (radhiAllaahu anhu) that indeed Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) said: 'He who does not trim/clip his moustache is not from us.'"*** [Ahmad / Tirmidhi / Nisai / Mishkaat page 381]

(vi). ***"Ibn Abbaas (radhiAllaahu anhu) reports that Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) said: 'Allaah Ta`ala has cursed those men who emulate women and those women who emulate men.'"*** [Bukhari, Mishkaat, page 380]

(1). From the first Hadith we ascertain that it is from the natural constitution and necessity of man that they trim their moustaches and lengthen their beards and it is contrary to the natural habits of man that they lengthen their moustaches and trim/shave their beards. Those who do this are spoiling the natural traits created by Allaah Ta`ala. It is stated in the Qur`aan Majeed that shaitaan, the accursed, told Allaah Ta`ala that he will lead man

astray and that he will instruct and encourage them to change their natural Allaah-given traits and features. It is stated in Tafseer-e-Haqqaani and Tafseer Bayaanul Qur`aan that the shaving of the beard is also included in changing the natural Allaah-given features of man, because Allaah Ta`ala had naturally beautified the face of man with a beard. Therefore, those who shave/trim their beards fall under the scope of shaitaan's ploy and they are guilty of altering their natural Allaah-given traits.

The way of the Ambiyaa (alaihimus salaam) is an icon for the nature of mankind. It is for this reason that the way, Sunnat and methods of the Ambiyaa can also be taken as being the example of the *Fitrat* of man. In view of this, we note that it is the unanimous Sunnat of approximately 124 000 Ambiyaa to clip the moustache and lengthen the beard. This is the blessed group whom we have been instructed by Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) to follow. Therefore, those people who shave/trim their beards are acting contrary to the Sunnat of the Ambiyaa. It is as though this Hadith is warning us of being guilty of a combination of three sins by shaving/trimming the beard; (1) contravening the *Fitrat* of man, (2) submitting to shaitaan by altering the Allaah-given features and (3) opposing the Sunnat of the Ambiyaa (alaihimus salaam). Hence, due to these three reasons, it is Haraam to shave the beard.

(2). The second Hadith instructs us to trim the moustaches and to lengthen the beards. It is Waajib to obey the instructions of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) and Haraam to act contrary to it. Hence, this is the reason why it is Waajib to keep a beard and Haraam to shave/trim it.

(3). In the third and fourth Hadith it is mentioned that to trim the moustache and lengthen the beard is amongst the hallmarks of Muslims. On the contrary, it is the sign and hallmark of the fire-worshippers and Mushrikeen to lengthen the moustache and to trim/shave the beard. Our Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) has encouraged all Muslims to adopt the hallmarks of Islaam and shun those of the non-Muslims. It is Haraam to abandon a sign of Islaam and adopt one of an astray nation. Rasulullaah (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) said:

"Whosoever imitates a nation is one of them." [Jaamius Sagheer, page 8, vol. 2]

Hence those people who shave / trim their beards, thereby abandoning a sign of Islaam and adopting one of the kuffaar, whose opposition Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) has stressed upon, ought to fear the warning of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) that on the day of Qiyaamah, their resurrection will be amongst the non-Muslims. *Nauthubillaah.*

(4). The fifth Hadith states that those people who do not trim their moustaches are not from amongst us. It is clear that this same warning applies to those who shave their beards. This is a very severe and stern warning for these people who shave their beards simply due to their desires, fancies and shaitaani deceptions. Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) has expelled such persons from his group. Can anyone who has even the slightest attachment to Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) be able to bear this warning?

Our Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) has such a dislike and abhorrence for the shaving of the beard that when the messenger from the Shah of Iran presented himself in the presence of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) he (the messenger) was clean-shaven and his moustache was long:

"Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) detested looking at his face. He (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) said: 'Woe unto you, who has commanded you with this?' They replied: 'Our rabb, that is, Kisrah, has ordered us with this.' Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) said: 'But, my Rabb has ordered me with lengthening the beard and trimming the moustache.'" [Al-Bidaaya Wan Nihaaya, page 269, vol. 4 / Hayaatus Sahaabah, page 115, vol. 1]

Hence those people who act contrary to the instruction of the Rabb of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) are in actual fact obeying the command of the deity of the fire-worshippers. They should consider how they are going to show their faces to Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) on the Day of Qiyaamah. If Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) expels them from his group on account of their altering their Allaah-given features, then upon whom will they depend on for intercession?

(5). We also ascertain from the fifth Hadith that it is Haraam and a major sin to shave/trim the beard and to lengthen the moustache, because Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) would warn against any major sin in this way that the perpetrator thereof will be expelled from his group.

(6). In the sixth Hadith Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) has cursed those men who imitate women and those women who emulate men. In commentary of this Hadith, Mullah Ali Qaari (rahmatullahi alaih), author of *Mirqaat*, states that the words ***"La`anallaahu"(Allaah has cursed)*** is a phrase which is used as a *Bid-dua* (curse), that is, may the curse of Allaah Ta`ala be on such people or it also implies an informative sentence, that is, Allaah Ta`ala has placed His Curse on such people.

Besides the above-mentioned evils of shaving the beard, one of the evils is that of imitation of females. Allaah Ta`ala has made the beard a means of differentiation and distinction between the genders. Hence, those who shave their beards are removing this distinction and resemble women. This is an act liable for the curse of Allaah Ta`ala and Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam).

Considering all these texts, there is a consensus amongst ALL the Fuqahaa of the Ummat that it is Waajib to lengthen the beard and this is also a hallmark of Islaam. To shave it and trim it (to less than the minimum fist-length) is Haraam and a major sin, whereupon Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) has issued severe warnings.

May Allaah Ta`ala grant all Muslims the guidance to save themselves from Haraam actions.

Answer to question # 2:

The Ahaadith stipulate that the beards be lengthened. A narration, whose *Sanad* (chain of narrators) is weak, which appears in Tirmidhi Shareef under the section *Kitaabul Adab* [page 100, vol. 2], states that the excess hair in the length and breadth of the blessed beard of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) would be trimmed. An explanation to this appears in a narration in Bukhari Shareef under the section *Kitaabul Libaas* [page 875, vol.2] wherein it is reported that when Hadhrat Ibn Umar (radhiAllaahu anhuma) completed his Hajj and Umrah and upon removing his *Ihraam* he would take his beard into his fist and trim off the extra hair. A similar narration on this subject is also reported regarding Hadhrat Abu Hurairah (radhiAllaahu anhu) [Nisbur Raaya, page 458, vol. 2].
It is clear from this that the minimum length for a beard must be fist-length [Hidaaya – *Kitaabus Saum*].

So, just as it is Haraam to shave the beard, it is similarly Haraam to trim it to less than a fist-length. It is stated in Durrul Mukhtaar:

> *"However, none has consented to trimming it (beard) less than that (fist-length), as some westerners and hermaphrodites do. To shave the beard off completely is the practice of the Jews of India and the fire-worshippers."* [Shaami, page 418, vol.2]

This same subject is mentioned in *Fathul Qadeer, page 77, vol. 2 and Bahrur Raa`iq, page 302, vol. 2.*

Sheikh Abdul Haqq Muhaddith Dehlwi (rahmatullahi alaih) states in *Ash`atul Lam`aat*:

> *"It is Haraam to shave the beard. It is Waajib to let it lengthen to more than a fist-length (hence to cut it less than this is also Haraam)."* [Page 228, vol. 1]

It is mentioned in *Imdaadul Fataawa*:

> *"It is Waajib to keep a beard and it is Haraam to trim to less than a fist-full. Owing to the Hadith of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam): '**Oppose the Mushrikeen, lengthen the beards and trim the moustache'** [agreed upon]. It is stated in Durrul Mukhtaar that it is Haraam for men to trim/shave their beards. The Sunnat length is fist-length."* [Page 223, vol. 4]

Answer to question # 3:

Those Huffaaz who shave or trim their beards are guilty of a major sin and are termed as Fussaaq. Their Imaamat for the Taraaweeh Salaat is not permissible and in following them the Salaat becomes Makrooh-e-Tahrimi (i.e. Haraam in practice). As for those Huffaaz who keep a beard only for Ramadhaan and shave it thereafter, the same ruling applies to them. Those who make such persons Imaam for Fardh and Taraaweeh Salaats are also classified as Fussaaq and sinners.

Answer to question # 4:

Prior to understanding the answer to this question it is appropriate that one keeps in mind the basic principle that to jest at or censure any sign of Islaam or to belittle any Sunnat of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) is kufr, whereby a person leaves the fold of Islaam. We have established above that Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) has classified the beard as a sign of Islaam and a unanimous Sunnat of ALL the Ambiyaa (alaihimus salaam). So those folk who have a dislike for the beard and look upon it with disdain, or they prevent any of their friends from keeping one, or they rebuke and censure them if they keep a beard, or those who do not accept as a husband if they have a beard, then all such people should start pondering and question their Imaan. It is necessary for such people to repent and renew their Imaan and Nikah. Hakeemul Ummat Hadhrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thaanwi (rahmatullahi alaih) writes in *Islaahur Rusoom* on page 10:

"In short those customs where the beard is shaved off or trimmed to less than a fist-length, or the moustache is lengthened, which is common nowadays amongst the youth who regard it as appealing. It is stated in a Hadith which appears in Bukhari and Muslim that the beards should be lengthened and moustaches trimmed. In this Hadith Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) used the scale of Amr (command) for both these things. This is for compulsion. Hence, it is established that these two things are Waajib and to omit a Waajib act is Haraam. Hence, the shaving of the beard and the lengthening of the moustache are both Haraam acts. Over and above this it is mentioned in another narration that whosoever does not clip his moustache is not amongst us [Ahmad, Tirmidhi and Nisai]. Since it is established that these acts are a sin, then those who continue on these acts and are pleased with it, and those who regard lengthening the beard as a defect, in fact, they even mock at those who have beards and they rebuke them. For all such acts, it is difficult to say that one's Imaan remains intact. It is Waajib for all such persons to repent and renew their Imaan and Nikah. They should also mend their ways and make their features to conform with the desires of the Order of Allaah Ta`ala and Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam)."

Answer to question # 5:

As for those people who shave their beards during the course of Hajj or after returning from Hajj, their condition is more pitiful than normal people, since they cannot even refrain from a major sin at the House of Allaah Ta`ala. in the Court of Allaah Ta`ala only those Hajj are accepted which are free from sin. Some Ulama have written that a sure sign of acceptance of Hajj is that a person who returns from Hajj undergoes such a change in his life that he now becomes more wary of Allaah Ta`ala and he refrains from sin. That person whose life does not change after making Hajj -- just as he used to previously omit the Faraaidh he does the same after Hajj, and just as he was involved in major sins before his Hajj his condition is identical after the Hajj – then such a person's Hajj was in reality not a Hajji it was merely a joy-trip. Although according to the Shariah his Fardh duty is discharged but he is completely deprived of any blessings, Barkat and reward. What a sad state of affairs that a person spends so many thousands of rands, undergoes so many difficulties during his trip, and yet he does not get the Taufeeq to repent from his evil ways. If a person, whilst on a Hajj trip, commits adultery or theft and he does not feel any regret over his action or repents, then how can such a person's Hajj be accepted?

The shaving of the beard is in one respect even worse than other major sins like theft or adultery, since these sins are limited to a specific time, whereas the sin of shaving lasts for 24 hours. A person who shaves is involved in this sin whilst in Salaat whilst keeping fast, whilst on Hajj or Umrah, and even during his

performing of Salaat keeping of fast, etc. he falls under the curse of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). He is involved in the actual sin in the midst of his Ibaadat.

Hadhrat Sheikh Moulana Muhammed Zakariyyah (rahmatullahi alaih) states in his treatise *The compulsion of the beard*:

"When one looks upon such people (who shave) then this thought comes to mind that death does not have stipulated time. And if such people have to die whilst in this shaven state, then how will they ever be able to face the blessed countenance of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), when the first sight of him will be in the grave. Together with this, occasionally this thought also comes to mind that other major sins like adultery, homosexuality, alcoholism, dealing in interest, etc. are all restricted to a specified time. Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) said: ***'An adulterer does not commit adultery whilst in the state of Imaan.'*** *The Mashaaikh have written that the object of this Hadith is that during the course of the act of adultery, the Imaan of the adulterer leaves him/her. But after the act is complete, then the Noor of the Imaan returns to one. But, the sin of shaving is such that it remains with one all the time. Whilst performing Salaat then this sin is being perpetrated, whilst in the state of fasting, this sin is with one, the same applies to Hajj. This sin is being perpetrated whilst performing every act of Ibaadat."* [Page 4]

Hence, it is compulsory for every person who intends Hajj or Umrah, that he correct his distorted (shaven) features and appearance prior to presenting himself in the House of Allaah Ta`ala and the sanctified Masjid of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), he must make sincere repentance that he will never again return to this sin.

Otherwise, Allaah Ta`ala forbid, that his condition not be like the poem of Sheikh Saadi (rahmatullahi alaih):

"The mule of Isaa, even if it goes to Makkah, when it returns it will still be the mule of Isaa."

He should also reflect that when he presents himself at the Mubarak Grave of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), then what face will he show? How much of pain will he not cause Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) with his distorted (shaven) features?

Answer to question # 6:

The concern of such people outwardly appears to be commendable. Their concern appears to be one of respect and honour for the beard, but if they reflect carefully, they will realise that they are prey to the ploys of shaitaan. This is the ploy of shaitaan whereby he involves many people in sin. Understand this by way of one example; a Muslim defrauds and betrays others, whereby the image of the entire Islaamic brotherhood becomes tainted. Now if shaitaan comes to him and makes him regret his action of spoiling the image of Islaam and the Muslims, and he 'convinces' him that it is a necessity for the sanctity of Islaam that he, *Nauthubillaah*, leave the fold of Islaam and becomes a Sikh. Now, due to this evil thought, should he leave the fold of Islaam? Or not? In fact, if he really has the sanctity and honour of Islaam at heart, then he will never leave the fold of Islaam; rather he will refrain from all such actions which bring disrepute to the name of Islaam and the Muslims.
Similarly, if shaitaan inspires a person thus that if he keeps a beard and perpetrates an evil act, then it will bring disrepute to all the bearded ones and it will be contrary to the sanctity and honour of the beard. Then because of this thought, the beard will not be removed, rather this person will make a concerted effort to reform his ways and refrain from such sins which bring disrepute to bearded ones and which are against the sanctity of the beard.

Why don't these people not have this thought that they will keep their beards and refrain from sins? If these people had the reality of the sanctity of the signs of Islaam at heart, then the call of the Imaan and intelligence is that they keep a beard. They should make this firm resolve that they will refrain from all major sins. They should make dua that Allaah Ta`ala grant them the Taufeeq to safeguard this sign of Islaam by keeping a beard. Nevertheless, we will never be successful in safeguarding the sanctity of this great sign of Islaam based on this imagined fear.

There can never be any reason for depriving oneself of this great hallmark of Islaam. It is necessary for every Muslim (male) to bring into practice this sign of Islaam in themselves and also make a concerted effort in bringing it alive in their societies, so that on the Day of Qiyaamah every man is resurrected with it, thereby deserving the intercession of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam).

"It is reported from Abu Hurairah (radhiAllaahu anhu) that Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) said: 'All of my Ummat will enter Jannat except the one who refuses.' The Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum) asked: 'Who is the one who refuses?' Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) replied: 'Whosoever follows me will enter into Jannat, and whosoever disobeys me, he has indeed refused.'" [Saheeh Bukhari, page 1082, vol. 2]

SUPPLEMENTARY NUMBER 3

THE RULING REGARDING THE LENGTH OF THE BEARD

(by Janaab Moulana Sayyid Ahmad Saheb U`ruj Qaadiri, editor of the monthly *Zindagi*, Raampoor)

"I trust that Hadhrat is in good health. I am making a request to you regarding research on the Mas`alah of the beard. I hope that you will enlighten me on the subject. We have heard that the Deobandis, Barelwis, Ahle Hadith and pious personalities of every faction have placed considerable stress on the beard.

It is on the status of Sunnat-e-Muakkadah or Waajib. In fact it now holds a position of being a Shi`aar (sign/hallmark). The Masnoon length of the beard is that it be longer than fist-length. Shorter than this is not permissible. It should be at least one fist length. The author of Durrul Mukhtaar and Sheikh Ibn Humaam have averred unanimity on this, in fact, we also hear that Sheikh Ibn Humaam has expounded that to keep a beard shorter than a fist-length is the practice of hermaphrodites. Contrary to this the members of Jamaat-e-Islaami do not grant importance to the beard. The keeping of beards by them is a heavy burden. They are forced to keep little, little beards. Their leaders claim that there is no specific length for a beard. Whatever little beard a person keeps is Masnoon. In this regard, in the December issue of Tarjumaanul Qur`aan you may have noted that Janaab Ghulaam Ali Saheb has stated in his article that the Ijma` is incorrect.
The request is that you shed some light on this subject."

Above is a summary of a letter. The author of this letter has also authored another letter wherein he has made clear his sentiments that Moulana Maududi himself, with all his qualifications, did not place any importance on the beard and this effect has fallen on *Jamaat-e-Islaami.*

There is a large group of Ulama and laymen who differ in principle with Moulana Maududi and *Jamaat-e-Islaami.* But these people keep this hidden and they capitalise on matters such as the beard etc. If I receive a letter from this type of group then I tear it up and discard it. However there are many such people who agree with *Jamaat-e-Islaami* and they seriously wish to understand this Mas`alah. The above letter emanates from this genuine group. This letter is based on a misconception therefore this humble writer deems it appropriate to first remove these doubts. This which he has written that the members of *Jamaat-e-Islaami* and Moulana Maududi himself place little importance on the beard is completely contrary to the truth. The object of whatever Moulana Maududi has written on this subject is definitely not as he has claimed that they place scant importance on the beard. In fact contrary to this, with regard to the importance of the beard some of his discussions are wholly inspiring. I am unaware whether the author of this letter has studied all Moulana Maududi's treatises which appear in the first part of *Rasaail wa Masaail.* My advice to the author of this letter is that he thoroughly read through the subject matter which appears in this Kitaab under the caption: *"A question regarding the beard"*

Any objective person who reads through this content will not claim that the beard is an unimportant thing. From his writings one may have this doubt because he does not attach much importance as other Ulama and Mashaaikh do to the length and breadth of the beard. His opinion in this mas`alah is that according to the Shariah there is no specified length for the beard therefore (in his view) to specify a minimum of at least one

fist-length is incorrect. As far as I know there is no such excerpt in *Jamaat-e-Islaami* which can be misconstrued as their attaching no importance to the beard.

The author of the letter should also ponder over this fact that if according to Moulana Maududi the keeping of a beard is unimportant, then why would his influenced members *"be forced to keep little, little beards"*? Why do the countless new recruits who were previously clean-shaven now sport beards? I also accede to this fact that many of the members are influenced by the Moulana's view regarding the length of the beard. One must also remember this much that it is incorrect to aver that all the members agree with this view of his. I am unaware of the condition in Pakistan, but as far as the *Jamaat-e-Islaami* in India is concerned, which has already established itself, many of its members who, notwithstanding studying Moulana Maududi's works, disagree with him on this point. This humble author also disagrees with Moulana on this point. Since the author of the letter has enquired in earnest, it is appropriate that I explain my view on this Mas`alah in some detail.

In order to reflect upon this Mas`alah, I have outlined a few points hereunder:

1. Why was the order given to lengthen the beards and what is the object of Nabi's (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) words?
2. What is the meaning of *I`faa* (lengthen) and what other words have been reported which are synonymous to it?
3. What is the standing of the practice of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) in so far as the length of the beard is concerned?
4. Is the order to lengthen the beards a general one or is it specific?
5. Is there any Faqeeh from those Fuqahaa who take the view of the order being specific who aver that it is permissible for the beard to be less than a fist-length?
6. Clarity on the view of Moulana Sayyid Abul A`laa Maududi

(1). Upon reflection on the Mas`alah on the beard and the length of the beard this comes to one's attention that when Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) gave the order to lengthen the beards both he (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) and the Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum) had beards. The entire (male) population of Arabia had beards. In fact, even the citizens of the countries in the vicinity of Arabia were not habituated to shaving their beards. Every single person at that time, in those areas saw the beard as a clear distinction between the genders and the beard was even looked upon as a symbol of beauty upon the face of men. They naturally regarded those who could not grow beards and those who shaved as being defective.

A question now arises as to why, amidst this situation, was an order issued to lengthen the beards and what was the object of this instruction?

In answer to this question I will cite a Hadith which will clarify the issue of both the beard and its length and one will come to know the Shar`i standpoint on the issue:

"It is reported from Abu Hurairah (radhiAllaahu anhu) that Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) said: 'Trim your moustaches and lengthen the beards, (in this way you will) oppose the fire-worshippers.'" [Muslim Shareef]

This Hadith is reported thus, in the words of Hadhrat Abdullaah Ibn Umar (radhiAllaahu anhu):

"It is reported from Ibn Umar from Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), that he said: 'Oppose the Mushrikeen, (by) lengthening the beards and trimming the moustaches.'" [Bukhari Shareef, *Kitaabul Libaas*]

In this Hadith the word *Mushrikeen* is used for the fire-worshippers. Allaamah Aini (rahmatullahi alaih) writes:

"The words ***'Oppose the Mushrikeen'*** *refer to the Majoos (fire-worshippers). The narration in Muslim* ***'Oppose the Majoos'*** *indicates towards this."*

This Hadith indicates the reason for this instruction being given. From amongst the neighbours of the Arabian continent, the Persians were the first to make an attack on the masculine beauty – the beard. Since at that time shaving of the beard was regarded as a defect and looked upon with disdain, the fire-worshippers (Persians) did not have the courage to immediately remove their beards. They began this process by slowly shortening their beards. Steadily some eventually started shaving it off. This effect of the Persians slowly crept in amongst the Arabs who also began shortening their beard and shaving it off. At that time, although the Muslims had beard, but they did not have a Deeni ruling regarding it, so there was a fear and a possibility that this effect of removing the beards would permeate into the Muslims from the Persians, and the latter generations would have imitated this custom and evil habit of the fire-worshippers. In order to prevent this catastrophe, Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) gave the instruction that it is incumbent for all Muslim males to lengthen their beards so as to oppose the fire-worshippers. The matter of the beard is not merely a customary or habitual trait. It has a firm Islaamic hue and it is a hallmark of the Deen.

This much is recorded by all the Muhadditheen that at that time the fire-worshippers were not in the habit of shaving off their beards completely, but they kept short beards. During the time of Abu Shaama, when custom of shaving the beard gained some impetus, he said with great grief and sorrow:

"Now, such people are being born who shave their beards. This matter is graver than what has been reported about the fire-worshippers, because they used to shorten their beards." [Fathul Baari]

Imaam Nawawi (rahmatullahi alaih) writes:

"It was amongst the habits of the Persians that they used to shorten their beards, and the Shariah has prohibited this." [Commentary of Muslim]

There were some amongst them who used to shave off their beards completely, as Allaamah Aini writes:

"Because indeed they would shorten their beards and some amongst them would shave it off."

From this discussion the object for the order to lengthen the beards can clearly be understood. In this narration there is also an indication as to the length of the beard. Since the fire-worshippers used to shorten their beards and the Muslims have been given the instruction to oppose them then it is quite obvious that the beards of the Muslims be longer than that of the fire-worshippers. However, the matter is still slightly unclear, and this uncertainty is dispelled by observing the practice of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) and the Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum).

(2). The words which are used in the Hadith for lengthening the beards also makes clear the intent of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). Five words are used in these Ahaadith: ***I`faa, Eefaa, Irjaa, Irkhaa and Towfeer***. In some narrations the word used is ***I`faa,*** in other narrations ***Owfoo***, in others ***Irjoo***, in others ***Irkhwaa*** and in others ***Wafru.***

Regarding all these words, Imaam Nawawi (rahmatullahi alaih) writes:

"The meaning of all theses words is: Leave the beards in their present (natural) condition."

Haafiz Ibn Hajar (rahmatullahi alaih) states that the meaning of ***Wafru*** and ***Owfoo*** is to leave it in its condition. The meaning of ***Irkwaa*** is to lengthen it. Imaam Bukhari (rahmatullahi alaih) and other Muhadditheen have stated that ***I`faa*** means to lengthen. In this regard Ibn Daqeequl Eid states:

"The interpretation of I`faa is to lengthen and this is based on this principle that a Sabab (reason/cause) stands in the place of the Musabbab (causer / originator), because indeed the reality of I`faa is to leave, that is, to leave the beard to lengthen naturally." [Fathul Baari, vol.1]

The explanation of all these words used in the various narration clearly explains that the object of the Hadith is not merely for the keeping of a beard, it is for lengthening the beard.

(3). Now let us reflect and ponder with regard to the practice of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) in so far as the length of the beard.

The Ulama of Usool have categorised the actions of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) into various types and they have explained them in detail. The actions of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) are divided into two types; firstly are those actions which have no connection with proximity (to Allaah Ta`ala) or Ibaadat. They have a relation to habit and instinct, for example, eating, sitting, sleeping, getting up, wearing clothing, etc. Such matters have the scope of permissibility in the Shariah. That is, it is permissible to carry out any of these actions.

The second type of action of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) are those which do not have any relation to the habit or instinct of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), in fact, they are directly related to gaining proximity to Allaah Ta`ala and Ibaadat. This type of actions are further sub-divided into many other categories. One of these types is directly related to the mas`alah under discussion. That it, those actions which are either ordained by the Qur`aan Majeed or they are clearly ordered by Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). The ruling regarding such actions would be as these actions were expounded and instructed. If the action is to be Waajib then the explanation and verb used would indicate this. Similarly for Mustahab (optional). This much is also accepted that various different rulings can be ascertained from the actions and instructions of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam).

The Mas`alah under discussion is also classified and interpreted under the accepted principle of the Shariah and it is free from any doubts and vagueness. The interpretation and explanation of the instruction to leave the beard in its natural form and allow it to lengthen can be found in the practice of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). The ruling of this order of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) can be found in his Mubarak action and practice. So, if the order for lengthening the beards was Waajib, then the action of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) would also be Waajib and if it was optional then this would be found in the action of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). All Ulama-e-Haqq are unanimous that lengthening the beard is a Sunnat-e-Muakkadah and the beard is a hallmark of Islaam.

The explanations and incidents which involve the blessed beard of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) that can be found in the Ahaadith and history Kitaabs make it clear that his beard was certainly longer than a fist-length and most certainly not shorter than this. It appears in some narrations that he (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) was *"Fully bearded"*, that is, the beard of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) had abundant hair. In other narration it is stated that Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) was *"Thick bearded"*, that is, his Mubarak beard was dense and thick. Some narrations state that Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) was *"big bearded"*, that is, his Mubarak beard was full. This same condition can be found in the history Kitaabs regarding the Khulafaa-e-Raashideen (radhiAllaahu anhum). Sheikh Abdul Haqq Muhaddith Dehlwi states in *Mudaarijun Nubuwwat*:

"The beard of Ameerul Mu`mineen Hadhrat Ali (radhiAllaahu anhu) used to fill his chest. In a similar way the bards of Ameerul Mu`mineen Hadhrat Umar's (radhiAllaahu anhu) and Hadhrat Uthmaan's (radhiAllaahu anhu) beards used to fill their chest."

It is said regarding Hadhrat Umar (radhiAllaahu anhu): *"He was thick bearded"* [Isti`aab].

It is said regarding Hadhrat Uthmaan (radhiAllaahu anhu): *"He was big bearded"* [As-haabah]

From this we ascertain that the beards of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) and the Khulafaa-e-Raashideen (radhiAllaahu anhum) were longish, thick and dense.

(4). Is the ruling regarding the words ***I`fool Luhaa*** (lengthen the beards) general or are there any exceptions?

The answer to this question is that there is a group of Ulama who aver that the ruling of this is general with no exceptions.

Tabri has mentioned that some Fuqahaa have opined for the meaning of this Hadith at face value. They aver that it is Makrooh to trim the beard on any side. [Fathul Baari, vol.10]

Imaam Nawawi (rahmatullahi alaih) has made mention of it twice in the commentary of Muslim Shareef. In one place he mentions:

"This is clear from the Hadith, which is the import of the words. This is what a group of our companions and other Ulama claim."

He writes in another place:

"The preferred opinion is to leave the beard in its natural condition and not to trim it al all."

The author of *Tuhfatul Ahwazi* writes, whilst refuting those who have made *Takhsees* (an exception) to the length of the beard:

"Hence the best and preferred view is that view of those who opine for the Hadith at face value, that is, to leave the beard in its natural state. They prohibit that any part of the beard be trimmed either lengthwise or breadth-wise."

Allaamah Shaukaani (rahmatullahi alaih) has also taken the view of Imaam Nawawi (rahmatullahi alaih) and he has accepted the Hadith to be general and unrestricted. He does not accept that the Hadith of Hadhrat Ibn Umar (radhiAllaahu anhu) to be regarded as an exception to the general. He also does not regard the Hadith of Hadhrat Amr Bin Shuaib (radhiAllaahu anhu) as being worthy of proof [Neel, page 142, vol.1]

The proof of this group that the Hadith is *Aam* (general) is that there is nothing in the words or action of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) which indicates that the Hadith can be made *Takhsees*. They say that the Hadith which instructs it in words is free from any exceptions (in the length) and the Hadith of Nabi's (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) practice is weak.

From this explanation we gather that the view of *Takhsees* is such that it is not in the category of certainty, where all the Fuqahaa are unanimous upon it. In fact, there is a group, amongst whom is Imaam Nawawi (rahmatullahi alaih), who is a notable personality, that refute the claim of *Takhsees*.

The other group of Fuqahaa do not regard the Hadith as being *Aam*, in fact, they hold the view of there being *Takhsees* in the ruling of the length of the beard. This group is further divided. Haafiz Ibn Hajar (rahmatullahi alaih) writes, quoting from Imaam Tabri (rahmatullahi alaih):

"The view of one group is that if the beard grows to longer than a fist-length then the excess should be trimmed off. In substantiation of this view, Tabri has quoted three narrations. The first is that Hadhrat Abdullaah Ibn Umar (radhiAllaahu anhu) did this. Secondly, Hadhrat Umar (radhiAllaahu anhu) did like this for a certain person where he trimmed off that part of his beard which was over a fist-length. Thirdly, Hadhrat Abu Hurairah (radhiAllaahu anhu) also did likewise. Besides this, Abu Dawood has quoted this authentic narration from Hadhrat Jaabir (radhiAllaahu anhu), where he says: 'We used to leave our beards in their natural state, except on the occasion of Hajj and Umrah, where we would trim off slightly.' It is apparent from the narration of Hadhrat Jaabir (radhiAllaahu anhu) that the Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum) would only trim their beards on the occasion of Hajj or Umrah.
Then Tabri expounds on the difference regarding whether there is any limit to trimming the beard or not. In this regard he has made mention of three views.

The first group aver that only that part of the beard be trimmed off which is longer than a fist-length. The second view is that of Hasan Basri (rahmatullahi alaih) who says that the beard must only be trimmed lengthwise and breadth-wise such that it does not conform to the length and thinness that is adopted by the non-Arabs. Hadhrat A`taa (rahmatullahi alaih) has also expressed this view. The third group aver that it is Makrooh and impermissible to trim the beard other than on the occasion of Hajj or Umrah.

Imaam Tabri has preferred the view of Hadhrat A`taa (rahmatullahi alaih), who says that if a person leaves his beard to grow unrestricted and wildly, then such a person is making himself a pawn of jest for others. Tabri has used as a proof in this Mas`alah the Hadith of Amr Bin Shuaib that Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) used to trim some part of his blessed beard lengthwise and breadth-wise. This Hadith is reported in Tirmidhi, but Bukhari has rejected this Hadith on the basis that one of its narrators, Umar Bin Haroon has been declared as unreliable and weak by the Muhadditheen. Qaadhi Iyaadh says that to shave, trim and shorten the beard are impermissible. Yes, if the beard lengthens considerably, then one may trim it slightly on the sides. In fact, just as it is impermissible to keep it very short, so too is it impermissible to keep it very long. However Nawawi has refuted this view of Qaadhi Iyaadh and says that this is contrary to the apparent Hadith, which instructs that the beard be lengthened. He says the preferred view is that the beard be left in its natural state and not trimmed at all. Nawawi means here that besides the occasions of Hajj and Umrah, the beard must not be trimmed at all. This is the reason why Imaam Shaafi (rahmatullahi alaih) has stipulated that it is Mustahab to trim the beard slightly on the occasions of Hajj and Umrah." [Fathul Baari, vol. 1]

I have quoted here this extract from Fathul Baari because it has all the different views regarding the *Takhsees* and it also lists the various proofs. From these views, I wish to firstly dilate on that of Hasan Basri and A`taa (rahmatullahi alaihima). This is also the view which Tabri has opined for. Some people have understood the import of the words *"The beard should be trimmed lengthwise and breadth-wise so that it does not become wild"* to mean that the beard can be trimmed to less than a fist-length. It is the opinion of this humble writer that this opinion is incorrect for two main reasons. The first being that Imaam Tabri (rahmatullahi alaih) has clearly expounded on this view. He has cited two proofs for preferring this view. The summary of the first proof is that if a person pays no attention to his beard such that it grows wildly on all sides then his face becomes a pawn of jest and fun for others. We know that this is also the view of Hasan Basri and A`taa (rahmatullahi alaihima) that the beard not be left to grow indiscriminately where it becomes an object of fun for others. It is apparent that it will only become an object of fun if it grows longer than one fist-length and not if it is a fist-length. Tabri has quoted as a second proof the Hadith in Tirmidhi Shareef. This is a firmer proof and indicates unambiguously that there is no permissibility for having the beard shorter than a fist-length. The reason being that Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) never kept his beard shorter than that.

A second pertinent point in my opinion is that if their statements are misconstrued as meaning that a beard can be kept shorter than a fist-length, then this would be a clear contradiction of the injunction ***"Oppose the fire-worshippers".*** Besides this it would also be in clear contradiction of the practice of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) and the Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum). The difference of opinion in the statement of Hadhrat A`taa does not imply that he means a beard can be kept shorter than a fist-length. In fact, it means the opposite. He does not regard it as being permissible to limit the length of the beard to one-fist-length. He is of the opinion that the beard may be kept longer than one fist-length, on the condition that it does not grow unrestrictedly so as to become an object of jesting.

The author of *Tuhfatul Ahwazi* has explained the view of Hasan Basri and A`taa (rahmatullahi alaihima) as follows:

"I say that if the Hadith of Amr Bin Shuaib is authentic then the view of Hasan and A`taa is the most correct and just. But, the Hadith is weak and not worthy of being used a proof."

From this also we ascertain that the proof of Hadhrat Hasan Basri and A`taa (rahmatullahi alaihima) is the narration of Amr Bin Shuaib. If their view was that the beard be kept shorter than a fist-length then the author of *Tuhfatul Ahwazi* would never have said that their view is the most correct. As far as my research on this matter goes, I have never seen any Faqeeh state the view of Hadhrat Hasan Basri (rahmatullahi alaih) in substantiation for the permissibility of the beard being less than a fist-length. One of the proofs of whatever I am saying is in the words of Qaadhi Iyaadh (rahmatullahi alaih). Imaam Nawawi (rahmatullahi alaih) writes, quoting from Qaadhi Iyaadh:

"Qaadhi Iyaadh says: 'Indeed the predecessors have differed as to whether there is a limit (to the length of the beard). Amongst them are some who have not specified any limit for it except that it not be left unattended and to trim it if necessary. Imaam Maalik has forbidden growing it very long. Amongst them are those who have

limited it to a fist-length and trimming any excess. Amongst them are those who have forbade trimming it except on the occasion of Hajj or Umrah." [Commentary of Muslim Shareef]

The first group mentioned by Qaadhi Iyaadh includes Hadhrat Hasan and A`taa (rahmatullahi alaihima). Haafiz Ibn Hajar has cited the view of this group quoting Tabri who has attributed it to Hasan Basri and A`taa. Allaamah Aini has quoted Tabri who had attributed it to A`taa. From this discussion we note that there was a difference of opinion between the predecessors regarding whether there is a limit to the beard or not. There are only two views on this subject. The one group aver that the limit may be upto a fist-length and the other group say that there is no limit and that it should be longer, but not so long that it becomes wild and laughable.

It was not even in the thoughts of any of the predecessors that the beard be shorter than a fist-length.

The view of two groups have been expounded upon. One group have taken the Hadith on *Umoom* (general) without any *Takhsees* (exceptions and exclusions), whist the other group have opined that the beard not be allowed to grow indiscriminately. The third group have said that a limit for the beard is one fist-length. They are of the opinion that any hair longer than the fist-length may be trimmed off. This view necessitates some dilation since generally, the Hanafi Fuqahaa have stated that the length of fist-length is Masnoon.

According to my research of the Kitaabs thus far, it appears as though there are two groups of those who hold the view of one-fist-length. The smaller group among them is of the opinion that it is necessary and Waajib to trim whatever is longer than the fist-length. The second group aver that the minimum Masnoon length is a fist-length. To make it shorted than this is impermissible.

They say that to keep it longer than a fist-length is not only permissible, in fact, it is preferable.

The first of these two groups do not have any Shar`i proof to back their claim, hence it would be futile to discuss this view. However, the second group's view is substantiated and also the preferred one.

As mentioned earlier, Hadhrat Tabri has quoted the narrations regarding three Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum) which substantiates the view of one fist-length. The practice of Hadhrat Abdullaah Ibn Umar (radhiAllaahu anhuma) has an authentic *Sanad* (chain of narrators), hence to use this as a proof is preferable and appropriate. Imaam Bukhari (rahmatullahi alaih) states under *Baabul Libaas* under *Taqleemul Asfaar*:

"During Hajj and Umrah Ibn Umar used to take hold of his beard (in his fist) and trim whatever exceeded (a fist-length)."

Haafiz Ibn Hajar (rahmatullahi alaih) has narrated the Hadith from Muatta Ibn Maalik in these words:

"When Ibn Umar used to shave his head, he would trim his beard and moustache."

The narration in Bukhari clarified the length which Hadhrat Abdullaah Ibn Umar (radhiAllaahu anhu) would trim off on the occasion of Hajj and Umrah. As stated previously, some Fuqahaa do not regard this narration of Hadhrat Abdullaah Ibn Umar (radhiAllaahu anhuma) as being sufficient to render the Hadith of ***"Lengthen the beard"*** from *Aam* into *Takhsees*. However two other groups have made *Takhsees* of the Hadith based on these practices of the Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum). One group have stated that the limit of one fist-length be trimmed only on the occasion of Hajj or Umrah, as borne out by the authentic narration in Bukhari and Muatta Imaam Maalik. According to them to trim the beard on any other occasion in impermissible. The other group have not restricted this *Takhsees* to only Hajj and Umrah but have stated that one may trim the beard upto a fist-length at any time. As mentioned previously, this group have a few narrations to back their view. As for those who completely overlook the practice of Hadhrat Abdullaah Ibn Umar (radhiAllaahu anhu) and other Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum) have not acted fairly or correctly. To rule for permissibility based on the practices of the Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum) is necessary. It does not appear that the view of the Hanafi Fuqahaa is

erroneous when they claim that the minimum limit for the beard is a fist-length based on the various narrations and practices of the Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum).

The Fuqahaa and Muhadditheen have listed numerous possibilities regarding the practice of Hadhrat Abdullaah Ibn Umar (radhiAllaahu anhu). It is the view of this humble writer that the best possibility is the one stated in *Fathul Qadeer*. As mentioned earlier, Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) did not only give the instruction that the beards be lengthened, he also said ***"Oppose the fire-worshippers"***. It was also mentioned earlier that it was common practice at that time for the fire-worshippers to keep short beards. They were not yet habituated to shaving. Now the difficulty arises as to what the minimum length would be so as to oppose the fire-worshippers and at the same time lengthen the beard also, so as to conform to the blessed words of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). This difficulty is removed by the practice of Hadhrat Abdullaah Ibn Umar (radhiAllaahu anhu) where he demonstrated that minimum final Masnoon limit is a fist-length. None of the Sahaabah (radhiAllaahu anhum) ever objected to this practice of his. It is apparent that this length demonstrated by him is Masnoon and at the same time in opposition to the fire-worshippers. This is the perfect balance, otherwise it would not be possible that no one objected to it. This possibility and explanation is a fair reconciliation between all the narrations and it also appeals to the mind and intellect.

(5). Is there any Faqeeh from amongst those who opt for *Takhsees* that avers the permissibility of the beard being shorter than a fist-length?

The answer to this question has passed in the previous pages, which is that no one have ever consented to less than fist-length. However, it would be appropriate to mention here the view of one great Faqeeh – the author of *Fathul Qadeer*, Imaam Ibn Humaam (passed away 861 A.H.). He states:

"However the shortening of the beard to less than this (a fist-length) as is the practice of the westerners and hermaphrodites, has never been consented to by anyone." [Page 77, vol.12]

His claim of "*has never been consented to by anyone"* besides being true and acceptable, would be difficult to refute. This quotation of Ibn Humaam (rahmatullahi alaih) has been cited in many Kitaabs subsequent to his era, and none has ever refuted or opposed his claim. From amongst the latter Ulama, even Allaamah Ibn Aabideen Shaami (rahmatullahi alaih) has verified this claim and accepted it.

(6). Whatever Moulana Abul A`laa Maududi has written regarding the Mas`alah on the beard, is mentioned hereunder:

(a). *Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) has not specified any limit to the length of the beard* (Page 140}.

(b). *He (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) did not even mention that the beard and moustache be kept according to his own practice, as Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) stated regarding Salaat that read Salaat like how you see me reading Salaat.* [Page 247]

(c). *To suffice upon a brief instruction and abstaining from a detailed explanation, in itself denotes and points to this fact that the Shariah has left this matter free for the masses to decide what suits them. They may trim their moustaches and lengthen their beards to the extent that suits them and whatever they feel is appropriate for their features.* [Page 248]

(d). *Whatever length Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) kept his blessed beard upto will be related to his habit (Aadat-e-Rasool).* [Page 236 and 242] Further explaining this he states: *This question remains that since Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) gave the instruction to keep a beard and he has intended a specific beard which he demonstrated in his practice. That is, the Sunnat beard is the one Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) himself kept. This is such a proof that a person says Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) ordered covering the private parts, so the exact same clothing he used to cover his private parts, that very same type of clothes must be used by all and sundry and this is the Sunnat.* [Page 249]

(e). *Only this much was ordained that it (beard) be kept*. [Page140]

(f). *The limit and length of the beard is based merely on the research of the Ulama.* [Page 145]

All the above citation I have extracted from the first part of his Kitaab *Rasaail Wa Masaail*, which was published by *Maktab Jamaat-e-Islaami Hind*. I will now dilate on each of his views:

(a). That Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) has not specified a length for the beard, is mentioned so many times by Moulana Maududi that the reader may start thinking that nothing will be able to be specified unless Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) had specified it. Whereas this principle is accepted without any doubt that the specification of a limit or explanation of an unclear thing can be done by Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) actions as well as by his words. The limitations of many things have been established in the Shariah merely by the practice of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). There are also some things, which besides the practice of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) cannot be found elsewhere. For example there is no Shar`i limit in the form of explicit text (*Nass)* which is specified as a punishment for the drinker of alcohol. Where is the hand of a thief to be cut? Regarding this there is no Hadith of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) which specifies it. How many Rakaats are there in Taraaweeh? There is no clear text on this. So why does the Ummat not have the choice in these matters just as they have in the length of the beard to do as they please? If in all such matters the practice of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) is incumbently to be followed, then why can we not apply this same premise for the beard?

(b). Whatever is said in this second citation of his is an explanation to the first. Upon reading this sentence of Moulana Maududi's one cannot help but be astonished that he has restricted the Hadith of ***"Perform Salaat just as you see me performing Salaat"*** to only Salaat. That is, this statement of Nabi's (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) can be used as a guidance for other matters as well. Whereas all the Ulama of Usool have unanimously extracted from this statement of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) and his Hadith regarding Hajj ***"Take from me the rites (of Hajj)"*** the general principle and ruling that the practice of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) serves as an explanation to the unclear matters. The action of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) verifies a compulsory act for the Ummat. Another point to reflect over is that is the Hadith ***"For you is (compulsory to adhere to) my Sunnat and the Sunnat of the Khulafaa-e-Raashideen"*** restricted or limited to any particular Sunnat?

(c). Upon reading this text of his, any student of Deen will be astounded. From this is seems as though no practice of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) can be regarded as a demonstration or guide for an unclear Deeni matter. Or his practice cannot be regarded as an explanation to any vague matter. A question arises as to why such a well-read and well-studied person like Moulana Maududi makes such statements. The answer to this is forthcoming in the next answer.

(d). This is the original doubt and ambiguity which explains how Moulana Maududi has overlooked the practice of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) with regard to the length of the beard. It is the opinion of this humble writer that to make an analogy (*Qiyaas)* of the length of the beard with that of covering the private parts is a typical example of *Qiyaas Ma`al Faariq* (erroneous, illogical and incorrect comparison). The first thing is that covering of the private parts has got to do with clothing and as far as the Sunnat clothing of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) is concerned no one has declared its following to be Waajib. All Ulama regard this as being from the habits of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) and not a *Sunanul Hudaa*, which has a connection with Ibaadat and proximity with Allaah Ta`ala. Is the ruling of the beard also in this category? It is apparent that this is not so. No Imaam of Fiqh has classified the Mas`alah of the length of the beard as being from amongst the habits of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam). Therefore, to make *Qiyaas* of this Mas`alah upon that of clothing is incorrect.

Another major point of difference is that as far as limits and size are concerned the ruling regarding the covering of the private parts is not a vague or unclear one which requires explanation. For example, if any organ of the body has to be necessarily covered, one does not ask how much of it must be covered and how much can be exposed. But as far as the Mas`alah on the lengthening of the beard is concerned, Moulana himself concedes that its limitations are unclear. How then, can this Mas`alah be made *Qiyaas* upon with the covering of the private parts.

Due to all these reasons, it is the opinion of this humble writer that it is incorrect and an oversight to make *Qiyaas* of the length of the beard with that of covering the private parts. It is due to this oversight that Moulana has overlooked the practice of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) in this regard.

(e). To interpret the order of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) for lengthening of the beard as being a mere 'request' to keep a beard is taking the matter extremely lightly. There is no word or indication in the Hadith that suggests this interpretation, in fact, the Hadith is explicit that the beard ***must*** be kept and it ***must*** be lengthened and we ***must*** oppose the practice of the fire-worshippers. Whatever explanation the Muhadditheen have made regarding the lengthening of the beard has already passed in the previous pages. Hereunder I will quote a definition from some dictionaries.

Ibn Dareed states in *Jamhuratul Lughat*:

"A`raa Sha`ruhu: When in lenghthens.
A`fan Nabatu Wa Sha`ru Wa Ghayruhu: to lengthen, in a Hadith, indeed Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam) ordered with "I`fail Luhaa" and that is to lengthening the hair and increase it and not to trim it like the moustache…"

From this it is ascertained that when the word ***"A`fa"*** and ***"I`faa***" are used for hair then it means to lengthen and increase in it. Hence, to imply that these words which are used in the Hadith means to just keep a beard will be incorrect since the dictionary meaning of these words imply increasing in the beard.

(f). After studying the preceding pages, then it will be difficult for anyone to accept this claim of Moulana Maududi that the Mas`alah regarding the length of the beard is merely the result of the research of the Ulama (i.e. that it is a result of their deductions). To aver that it is the result of the deductions when in reality it can be found in the words and actions of Nabi (sallAllaahu alaihi wasallam), and in the practice of the Khulafaa-e-Raashideen, the Sahaabah-e-Kiraam (radhiAllaahu anhum) and Tabieen (rahmatullahi alaihim), will be incorrect. When the Ulama say that it is impermissible to trim the beard more than one fist-length then it is not merely a result of their conjecture, in fact, there is no Shar`i evidence to prove this (that it is permissible to trim the beard less than a fist-length). Besides this, it is incorrect to claim that the result of the research of the Aimmah-e-Fiqh holds any lesser rank than those rulings for which there is *Nusoos*.

Allaah Ta`ala says in the Qur`aan Majeed:

"And whoever opposes the Rasool after guidance has been expounded for him and he treads a path other than the path of the Mu`mineen, then We direct him to that path (which he has chosen), and We will fling him into Jahannum, an evil abode."

MUFTI AFZAL HOOSEN ELIAS , 1423 – 2002